Spring.

WORD PICTURES.

THOUGHTS AND DESCRIPTIONS

From Popular Authors.

Pictures of the Mind, Heart, and Life, selected from the works of great Artists in Literature.

"Picture out each lovely meaning."

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INSCRIBED TO

THE MEMORY OF MY BELOVED MOTHER

MARGARET GUTHRIE STROHM.

AND OF THE HAPPY DAYS WHEN WE READ

TOGETHER.

Note.

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THOUGHTS.

WORD PICTURES.

CHILDREN.

I LOVE these little people; and it is not a slight thing when they, who are so fresh from God, love us.

"OLD CURIOSITY SHOP."—*Dickens.*

A BIRD sings — a child prattles — but it is the same hymn; hymn indistinct, inarticulate, but full of profound meaning.

"NINETY-THREE."—*Victor Hugo.*

"WHAT sympathy children have with nature till education clouds it! How distinct the little face is in the flower, as if when the first hearts-

ease was fashioned there had been a thought in the heart of the Great Maker of the first child's face that should look into it ages after."

"OFF THE SKELLIGS."—*Jean Ingelow.*

AS AN intense grief has had the power in a few hours to turn the hair white, so likewise can a sudden and severe encroachment upon the feelings, in the years of youth, instantly ripen the careless, undeveloped thought of the child, and kindle the light of ideas.

"BIRTH AND EDUCATION."—*Madame Schwartz.*

I WONDER what the reason is that it is one of the first movements of affectionate feeling to change the name of the loved one. Give a baby a name, ever so short and ever so musical, where is the mother that does not twist it into some other pet name between herself and her child.

"MY WIFE AND I."—*Mrs. H. B. Stowe.*

WIN your child to love heavenly things in his early years, and he will not forget them when he is old. It will be as a very shield, compassing

him about through life. He may wander astray — there is no telling —in the hey-day of his hot-blooded youth, for the world's temptations are as a running fire, scorching all that venture into its heat; but the good foundation has been laid, and the earnest incessant prayers have gone up, and he will find his way home again.

"THE CHANNINGS."—*Mrs. Henry Wood.*

MEN AND WOMEN.

"It is, indeed, as good fun as a cynic could ask," to hear a man, after worrying over a dozen minor miseries, all suggested by some accidental rub to a hidden raw on the surface of his self-conceit, turn upon his wife — baited into a fit of crying — and from the proud eminence of his superior reason, tell her she is a "weak fool."

"Which shall it be?"—*Mrs. Alexander.*

To see a highly-wrought, passionate woman jealous, is often a grand picture; for there may be sublimity in a mental and emotional storm as well as in a material one. But to see a gentle nature struck to the heart by this demon, is a sorrowful sight; there is no thunder and lightning and wrath to sustain the energy of such a

one, but only tears, and silent, unutterable anguish. Such a woman struck by jealousy is like a dumb animal that has received its death-wound.

"EIRENE, OR A WOMAN'S RIGHT."—*Mrs. Mary Clemmer Ames.*

I BELIEVE single women should have more to do — better chances of interesting and profitable occupation than they possess now. And when I speak thus, I have no impression that I displease God by my words; that I am either impious or impatient, irreligious or sacrilegious. My consolation is, indeed, that God hears many a groan, and compassionates much grief which man stops his ears against, or frowns on with impotent contempt. I say *impotent*, for I observe that to such grievances as society cannot readily cure, it usually forbids utterance, on pain of its scorn; this scorn being only a sort of tinseled cloak to its deformed weakness. People hate to be reminded of ills they are unable or unwilling to remedy: such reminder, in forcing on them a sense of their own incapacity, or a more painful

sense of an obligation to make some unpleasant effort, troubles their ease and shakes their self-complacency. Old maids, like the homeless and unemployed poor, should not ask for a place and an occupation in the world; the demand disturbs the happy and rich.

"SHIRLEY."—*Charlotte Bronte.*

CIMOURDAIN was one of those men who have an interior voice to which they listen. Such men seem absent-minded; no, they are attentive.

"NINETY-THREE."—*Victor Hugo.*

MEN like women to reflect them; but the woman who can only reflect a man, and is nothing in herself, will never be of much service to him.

"GUILD COURT."—*George MacDonald.*

THE General's lion-like face glowed with good humor, so that kind words bubbled out of him like water from a spring; and every sentence was flavored with deep hidden thoughts, as water is charged with the properties of the soil

through which it passes in its upward course to air, undergoing some such transformations as the voice when it rises into meaning.

"YOUNG BROWN."—*Grenville Mellen.*

IT IS a curious anomaly to notice how harsh the very excess of a woman's sensibility frequently renders her.

She feels one side of a question so deeply, that there is no room left in her nature for considering even the possibility of there being another side at all.

"FAR ABOVE RUBIES."—*Mrs. J. H. Riddell.*

"MEN with hobbies are my detestation, Miss Walton."

"Nevertheless, they are the true knights-errant of our age. Of course it depends upon what kind of hobbies they ride, or whether they can manage their steeds."

"Miss Walton, your figure suggests a half idiot, with narrow forehead and one idea, banging back and forth on a wooden horse, but making

no progress — in other words, a fussy, bustling man who can do and talk but one thing."

"Your understanding of the popular phrase is narrow and literal, and while it may have such a meaning, can also have a very different one. Suppose, instead of looking with languid eyes alike upon all things, a man finds some question of vital import, or pursuit that promises good to himself and many others, and that enlists his interest. He comes at last to give it his best energies and thought. The whole current of his life is setting in that direction. Of course he must ever be under the restraints of good sense and refinement. A man's life without a hobby is a weak and wavering line of battle indefinitely long. One's life with a hobby is a concentrated charge."

"Opening of a Chestnut Burr."—*Rev. E. P. Roe.*

In the whole range of human feelings there is not a sensation that approaches so near to meek-

ness, as the pride of a woman who feels a wrong but gives it no utterance.

"THE HEIRESS."—*Mrs. Ann S. Stephens.*

SOMETHING coarse and vulgar in his nature exhaled, like a powerful odor, through the assumed shell of a gentlemen, which he tried to wear, and rendered the assumption useless.

"STORY OF KENNETT."—*Bayard Taylor.*

MARTHA DEANE'S voice was of that quality which compels an answer, and a courteous answer, from the surliest of mankind. It was not loud, it could scarcely be called musical; but every tone seemed to exhale freshness as of dew, and brightness as of morning. It was pure, slightly resonant; and all the accumulated sorrows of life could not have veiled its inherent gladness. It could never grow harsh, never be worn thin, or sound husky from weariness; its first characteristic would always be youth, and

the joy of youth, though it came from the lips of age.

"STORY OF KENNETT."—*Bayard Taylor.*

"How like a water-lily she looks among the others! white, still, graceful, as though she had been gathered up suddenly from the broad, slow current where her life had ripened, silent and serene, into a great white purity and fragrance, and the dew is on her still, and the sunlight!"

"THE HOLLANDS."—*Virginia F. Townsend.*

BETWEEN these two there had grown up, now during a period of many years, that undemonstrative, unexpressed, almost unconscious affection which with men will often make the greatest charm of their lives, but which is held by women to be quite unsatisfactory, and almost nugatory. It may be doubted whether either of them had ever told the other of his regard. "Yours always," in writing, was the warmest term that was ever used. Neither ever dreamed of suggesting that the absence of the other would be a

cause of grief or even of discomfort. They would bicker with each other, and not unfrequently abuse each other. Chance threw them much together, but they never did anything to assist chance. Women who love each other as well will always be expressing their love, always making plans to be together, always doing little things each for the gratification of the other,— constantly making presents backward and forward. These two men had never given anything, one to the other, beyond a worn-out walking-stick or a cigar. They were rough to each other, caustic and almost ill-mannered. But they thoroughly trusted each other; and the happiness, prosperity, and, above all, the honor of the one, were to the other, matters of keenest moment.

"VICAR OF BULLHAMPTON."—*Anthony Trollope.*

THE match-making of mothers is the natural result of mothers' love, for the ambition of one woman for another is never other than this—

that the one loved by her shall be given to a man to be loved more worthily.

"VICAR OF BULLHAMPTON."—*Anthony Trollope.*

SHE was like a breeze that set everything fluttering, and left the whole house freshened after she had passed on.

"THE GAYWORTHYS."—*Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.*

LOVE.

THERE are some people that we love so intensely that we can hardly speak even of our own love for them without tears.

"RED AS A ROSE IS SHE."—*Rhoda Broughton.*

WHERE man's thoughts are all noble and generous, woman's feelings all gentle and pure, love may follow, if it does not precede; and if not—if the roses be missed from the garland, one may sigh for the rose, but one is safe from the thorn.

"MY NOVEL."—*Bulwer.*

LOVE, at last, shall lave the feet that never wearied running on love's errands.

"PETER CARRADINE."—*Caroline Chesebro'.*

"WELL, but Arthur, did she marry him after all?"

Arthur looked wistfully a moment at his aunt.

"Marry him! Bless you, no, Aunt Winnifred. She was a goddess. Goddesses don't marry."

Aunt Winnifred did not answer. Her eyes softened like eyes that see days and things far away — like eyes in which shines the love of a heart that, under those conditions, would rather not be a goddess.

"TRUMPS."—*Geo. Wm. Curtis.*

TONY knew nothing of love personally; like Miss Surtown, he had never had any time for it, but he felt interested in the love affairs of those two young folks. It was like reading a pretty poem; and Tony really had some taste for poetry or a delicious little bit of fiction, and was fond of a clever story or a good novel. It was a little bit of romance introduced into his life, like a sweet song in a woman's voice mingling its

melody with all the discordant cries and clamors of a mob at election-time.

"THE LOVE THAT LIVED."—*Mrs. Eiloart.*

FIRST LOVE! It is but a word: yet, like that fabled word which only to pronounce would raise the dead, it has strange magic in it, and opens wide the sepulchres of the past!

"THE LADDER OF LIFE."—*Amelia B. Edwards.*

IF, instead of the neatly-rounded, reciprocal passions of three-volume fiction, the crude, *unfinished* love-stories of all hearts could be made known, I wonder which of the world's imperial Libraries would have space to hold the romances that might be written?

"STEVEN LAWRENCE, YEOMAN."—*Mrs. Annie Edwards.*

OH, thou, whoever thou art, who hast guardianship over one fond heart, fear not to breathe in words the tenderness thou art content only to feel. Break down the barrier of pride that opposes thine utterance, and let thy words gush

forth in showers of tenderness, fertilizing the dry and thirsty heart. The time may soon come when the hand which now seeks the warm pressure of yours will be cold and pulseless, — when the rosy doors of speech, which your silence has so often closed, will be shut forever: for there is no voice in the grave, nor any fond device. The electric wire is broken that sent the thrill from heart to heart. The lightning glance is quenched in night. The living is cut off from the dead. Love stands shivering on the brink of the dividing chasm, and over its bridgeless depths goes forth the wailing accents:

"Come back, poor cheated heart, receive all the wealth of which thou hast been defrauded. Roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, even as I roll it away from the gates of speech, and learn the height, the length, the depth, of my unuttered love."

"Robert Graham."—*Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz.*

It is a wonderful subduer, this need of love —

this hunger of the heart — as peremptory as that other hunger by which Nature forces us to submit to the yoke, and change the face of the world.

"Mill on the Floss."—*Marian Evans Lewes.*

It is one of the most exquisite properties of love that thus in its trial-time it makes mean things sacred. I have said "in its trial-time," because the glorious glamour then prevails with all, but only with the few lasts on and on beyond the trial-time and forever, so that the love of Rachel glorifies Jacob in his fields and his ploughing, even when the hairs of both are whitening and their period of probation has become a fading memory. It is not loves' fault, but ours' — the fault of heedlessness and selfishness, of the world, the flesh, and the devil — that the glorifying power ever loses its command over any life.

"Lady Judith."—*Justin McCarthy.*

Perhaps next to the pleasure of doing all for

those we love best, the joy of receiving all ranks highest.

"THE QUIET HEART."—*Mrs. Oliphant.*

SURELY love, if nothing else, inclines the soul to feel its helplessness and be prayerful, to place its treasures in a Father's hand.

"MY WIFE AND I."—*Mrs. H. B. Stowe.*

DESPITE the wealth of womanly feeling that had been aroused in her recently, she was more of a child than ever in her manner to her parents that night. Perhaps it was the knowledge that she was longing to try her wings abroad that made her fold them so softly now.

"THEO. LEIGH."—*Annie Thomas.*

LIFE was so sweet; love was so all-sufficient. The vivid days and perfumed nights were a part of the all pervading blessedness. In the morning she awoke, with lids like unclosing lilies feeling the sunlight before they part; at night, she slept, the leaves of her soul fast-folded over odorous dews of dreams.

"TOO TRUE."—*Mrs. Victor.*

SORROW.

WHAT mortal strength can be sufficient for the weight of the great chain of discipline that goes through every life, and binds it to the eternal shore beyond the waves of this troublesome world? No mortal strength can; its accumulated weight, only for an instant, would sink the stoutest struggler; but, link by link, not looking impatiently beyond, but looking patiently down, humbly and faithfully accepting it as the only means of safety, hard and rough and heavy as it maybe, it can be borne, and it will bring us surely to the haven where we would be. But, greedy of our sorrow as of our pleasure, vehement and unreasonable, we drag a weight upon

ourselves we have no warrant to suppose we shall have power to bear, and struggling, half crushed beneath the selfishly and morbidly retained burden of yesterday, and the dreaded but yet unbestowed calamity of to-morrow, we question, in our intolerable distress, if God has not broken His promise that we shall not be tempted above what we are able to bear. No verily; but we have broken faith with Him. We have not believed that one day's evil was sufficient for it, but have pulled down upon it the evil of many; and so, very likely, our punishment is greater than we can bear.

"THE SOUTHERLANDS," *Author of* "RUTLEDGE."

How often when we go about in the thoroughfares of a great city, we may be close to persons whose souls are filled with tumultuous agitation, whose destinies are hanging on a thread, or whose hopes have been suddenly crushed, who may have just taken a fatal or an heroic resolution, and we know it not! Children of the same Father in heaven — all creatures of God, and

members of the same race — we remain strangers to all but a few of that vast kindred of ours. Isolated by the boundless size of the great human family, it is only when some great visible calamity, or some casual event, breaks the silent barrier between man and man, that the relationship is felt and acknowledged. Have we not sometimes seen a face in the streets, or in a carriage in the parks, which has dwelt in our recollections from its expression of more than common mental anguish, and we have prayed that our common Father may take pity on that unknown brother or sister, and send them Him who is emphatically called the Comforter. Perhaps such prayers have been said for us erewhile, and drawn down upon us some secret blessings.

"Mrs. Gerald's Niece."—*Lady Georgiana Fullerton.*

It would not do to say that Realmah never smiled again; but it might be true to say that he hereafter designed his smiles and never finished them.

"Realmah."—*Sir Arthur Helps.*

THE little graves, alas! how many they are! The mourners above them, how vast the multitude! Brothers, sisters, I am one with you. I press your hands, I weep with you, I trust with you, I belong to you. Those waxen folded hands, that still breast so often pressed warm to our own, those sleep-bound eyes which have been so full of love and life, that sweet, unmoving, alabaster face — ah! we have all looked upon them, and they have made us one and made us better. There is no fountain which the angel of healing troubles with his restless and life-giving wings so constantly as the fountain of tears, and only those too lame and bruised to bathe miss the blessed influence.

"ARTHUR BONNICASTLE."—*Dr. J. G. Holland.*

HE had too much respect for sorrow to approach it with curiosity. He had learned to put off his shoes when he drew nigh the burning bush of human pain.

"ROBERT FALCONER."—*George MacDonald.*

WHAT is a man's first exclamation when he is shot through the lungs? What is the first outcry of despair from a broken heart? In either case the sufferer calls instinctively on his Maker. Be he a poor workman in a foundery, an obscure private in the ranks, or one who has spent his life in purple and fine linen, with all that the world holds best worth having at his feet, each child in its extremity appeals almost unconsciously to its Father. The soul flying to the lips renders this involuntary homage to its God.

"GOOD FOR NOTHING."—*Whyte Melville.*

"WOE'S me! it is a hard thing, whether it be in age or youth, to sound the deepness of folk's own spirit, and try how far down the pain can go."

"MARGARET MAITLAND."—*Mrs. Oliphant.*

THERE is one misery, and perhaps only one in the long category of human ills, to which the mind cannot shape itself or get accustomed, namely, the torture of suspense. What we know

and can see the end of, though that end be desolation and blank death — the loss of all (for it seems all) we love — can in the end, be borne. Time, though we so passionately deny its power to do so, does heal that wound; the cure is slow, perhaps; it may take years, and every year to us a century; and now and again the wound, touched by some thoughtless hand, or touched by none — the revisiting a once-loved scene, a sound remembered, the scent of a living flower, or the sight of a dead one — any one of these may cause it to bleed afresh, as on the first day of loss; yet the cure is certain. But for Suspense there is no cure, no intermission, no relief. The sense of loss, however great and overwhelming, is occasionally forgotten; the mind escapes from it, and wanders free, or sinks exhausted with its burden into slumber. Occupation is more or less *possible* to us; the voice of genius can pierce through the mists of time, and absorb us for a little in its magic words. If music cannot charm us from our melancholy, it can soften

it, for it is the fountain of tears; but Suspense has no such assuagement. Books cannot rivet its eye, nor music its ear. It resents such would-be alleviations, as the sick babe in pain resents its nurse's lullabies. They hinder it from its one function of employment, which is to watch, to listen, to anticipate the evil that is about to fall, it knows not whence, and fulfill the haunting presage of Ruin.

"THE BEST OF HUSBANDS."—*James Payn.*

"BUT when the hour of trouble comes to the mind or to the body — and seldom may it visit your Leddyship — and when the hour of death comes, that comes to high and low — lang and late may it be yours! Oh, my Leddy, then it is na what we hae dune for oursells, but what we hae dune for others, that we think on maist pleasantly."

"HEART OF MID-LOTHIAN."—*Sir Walter Scott.*

IN the first agony of a great grief we can all be unreserved; but when sorrow has settled

itself into its place, and made for itself the home in our memories in which it must dwell till death, we can no longer bear that the eye of a fellow-creature should gaze upon it.

"IVORS."—*Miss Sewall.*

HUMAN creatures are like climates — some of a temperate atmosphere, take even life-long sorrow serenely — never forgetting, and never exaggerating its cause — never very wretched, if never quite happy. Others of a more torrid nature, have long sunny seasons of bird-like cheerfulness and happy forgetfulness, until some slight cause, striking "the electric chain wherewith we are darkly bound," shall startle up memory — and grief, intensely realized, shall rise to anguish, and a storm shall pass through the soul, shaking it almost to dissolution. . . . . But the storm passes, and nature, instead of being destroyed, is refreshed and ready for the sunshine and the song-birds again. The elastic heart throws off its weight, the spirits revive,

and life goes on joyously in harmony with nature.

"The Missing Bride."—*Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth.*

At certain periods of life we live years of emotion in a few weeks — and look back on those times, as on great gaps between the old life and the new. You do not know how much you suffer in those critical maladies of the heart, until the disease is over and you look back on it afterward. During the time the suffering is at least sufferable. The day passes in more or less of pain, and the night wears away somehow. 'Tis only in after days that we see what the danger has been — as a man out a hunting or riding for his life looks at a leap, and wonders how he should have survived the taking of it.

"Henry Esmond."—*W. M. Thackeray.*

"WORDS OF TRUTH."

WE do not require the *expression in words* of sympathy — it is an indescribable something that betrays its existence.

"HOME INFLUENCE."—*Grace Aguilar.*

"IT is an excellent plan to have some place where we can go to be quiet, when things vex or grieve us. There are a good many hard times in this life of ours, but we can always bear them if we ask help in the right way."

"LITTLE WOMEN." (Vol. I.)—*Louisa M. Alcott.*

"IT's not half so sensible to leave a lot of legacies when one dies, as it is to use the money

wisely while alive, and enjoy making one's fellow-creatures happy with it."

"LITTLE WOMEN." (Vol. II.)—*Louisa M. Alcott.*

"KNOW your own affairs yourself, and don't be content to see them through other people's glasses."

"WHICH SHALL IT BE?"—*Mrs. Alexander.*

WE may always know something of people's characters by the things with which they surround themselves.

"NOTHING BUT MONEY."—*T. S. Arthur.*

INTO even the desire to benefit others flows a blessing — how much higher the blessing for those who make desire an ultimate actuality.

"NOTHING BUT MONEY."—*T. S. Arthur.*

"THE Word of God is like music. Every hearer, though there should be hundreds and hundreds of them, takes the whole without robbing his neighbor."

"EDELWEISS."—*Berthold Auerbach.*

FEELING without judgment is a washy draught indeed; but judgment untempered by feeling is too bitter and husky a morsel for human deglutition.

"JANE EYRE."—*Charlotte Bronte.*

THE best teacher is the one who suggests rather than dogmatizes, and inspires his listener with the wish to teach himself.

"KENELM CHILLINGLY."—*Bulwer.*

"ALAS! we interpret duty so variously. Of mere duty, as we commonly understand the word, I do not think I shall fail more than other men. But for the fair development of all the good that is in us, do you believe that we should adopt some line of conduct against which our whole heart rebels? Can you say to the clerk, 'Be a poet?' Can you say to the poet, 'Be a clerk?' It is no more to the happiness of a man's being to order him to take to one career when his whole heart is set on another, than it is to order him to marry one woman when it is to

another woman that his heart will turn. . . . . By the word happiness I would signify, not the momentary joy of a child who gets a plaything, but the lasting harmony between our inclinations and our objects; and without that harmony we are a discord to ourselves, we are incompletions, we are failures. Yet there are plenty of advisers who say to us, 'It is a duty to be a discord.' I deny it."

"KENELM CHILLINGLY."—*Bulwer.*

IN the life of most there come, at times, great fiery trials or strong temptations; and as those trials are received, as those temptations are yielded to or resisted, so do they work for our weal or woe — so does our spiritual life progress or deteriorate. Not for nothing are they sent to us, those trials and temptations; and if they work as they are meant, a great onward stride will often at once be made in a life which might otherwise have remained stagnant for many a year.

"ELENA."—*L. N. Comyn.*

HEAVEN sometimes converts our impossibles and inevitables into the very best blessings we have — most right, most natural, and most dear.

"CHRISTIAN'S MISTAKE."—*Mrs. Muloch Craik.*

OH! the blessing it is to have a friend to whom one can speak fearlessly on any subject; with whom one's deepest as well as one's most foolish thoughts come out simply and safely. Oh, the comfort — the inexpressible comfort of feeling *safe* with a person — having neither to weigh thoughts nor measure words, but pouring them all right out, just as they are, chaff and grain together; certain that a faithful hand will take and sift them, keep what is worth keeping, and then with the breath of kindness blow the rest away.

"A LIFE FOR A LIEE."—*Mrs. Muloch Craik.*

WHO ever could paint a mother's face? It seems, or ought to seem, unlike every other face in the wide world. We have been familiar with it all our lives — from our cradle we have drank

it in, so to speak, like mother's milk, and looked up to it as we looked up to the sky, long before we understood what was beyond it — only feeling its beauty and soothing power.

"My Mother and I."—*Mrs. Muloch Craik.*

Mercifully Heaven puts into some natures, especially those destined for a not easy life, a certain celestial leaven — a sense of the heroic, lovely, and divine — which the world calls romance, but which they themselves know to be that which sustains them in trial, braces them for bitter duties, comforts them when outside comforts are faint and few.

"The Woman's Kingdom."—*Mrs. Muloch Craik.*

Do you not now, O reader, if your years number more than some twoscore or so, recall the events of your childhood more clearly than you could have done at eighteen?

In the leafy summer-time we see only the screen of foliage that borders our pathway. Every hedgerow is full of life. Every branch

bears its bloom. But when autumn, like some grave and wise enchanter of old time, touches the world with his golden wand, and the transmuted leaves fall yellow from the bough, we look back through the open tracery, and the landscape we have traversed lies softly clear beneath our gaze.

"ANNE FURNESS."—*Miss Dickens.*

"The originality of a subject is in its treatment."

"LOTHAIR."—*Disraeli.*

IT may appear strange, yet you will sometimes know of two people living together through months of silence, because the right moment passed without the needed words being spoken, and no other ever came.

"STEPHEN DANE."—*Amanda M. Douglass.*

No life is all sunshine, nor was it so intended. And yet I think God doesn't mean us to fear the future. We are to take up daily events with

hopeful hearts, and shape them into a higher form than crude fragments.

"LYDNIE ADRIANCE."—*Amanda M. Douglass.*

PEOPLE admire talent, and talk about their admiration. But they value common sense without talking about it, and often without knowing it.

"MARY BARTON."—*Mrs. Gaskell.*

"I SOMETIMES think there's two sides to the commandment; and that we may say, 'Let others do unto you, as you would do unto them,' for pride often prevents our giving others a great deal of pleasure, in not letting them be kind, when their hearts are longing to help; and when we ourselves should wish to do just the same, if we were in their place. Oh! how often I've been hurt, by being coldly told by persons not to trouble myself about their care, or sorrow, when I saw them in great grief, and wanted to be of comfort. Our Lord Jesus was not above letting folk minister to Him, for He knew how happy it

makes one to do aught for another. It's the happiest work on earth."

"MARY BARTON."—*Mrs. Gaskell.*

THERE are no secrets which yield to commonplace or superficial inquiry. But there are none which do not answer the resolute student, who pledges his life to his investigation. There are no evils healed by the commonplace resolutions of commonplace conventions, where a hundred people offer each the thousandth part of a life for the endeavor. But no one evil stands against the resolute purpose of one loyal man. Let society tell you, in its namby-pamby editorials, what is everybody's business, and you will find laid down for you in its neutral colors a picture of very level backgrounds, of very vague middle distances, whose foregrounds are crowded with undecided groups of dreamers, who are all preparing to begin to try. But do *you* tell society how *you* mean to serve mankind, find your own place and strike your own blow, and society will

meekly obey each true word you speak, and will fall into order at your requisition.

Hold to the level best which the commonplace of society demands of you, and you come out on the quagmire flat of the dismal swamp of worthless indecision.

Ask God to show your duty, and do that duty well; and from that point you mount to the very peak of vision. It may be that you plant there another beacon-light for the world!

"HIS LEVEL BEST."—*Rev. E. E. Hale.*

WE went on in our quiet way. Life was purer and simpler and less annoyed to us, because constantly, now, we met with near and dear friends whom we had not known a day before, and who looked up and not down, looked out and not in, looked forward and not backward, and were ready to lend a hand. Life seemed simpler to them, and it is my belief that, to all of us, in proportion as we bothered less about cultivating ourselves, and were willing to spend and be

spent for that without us, above us, and before us, life became infinite and this world became heaven.

"TEN TIMES ONE IS TEN."—*Rev. E. E. Hale.*

THOSE who have the power of reproaching in silence may find it a means more effective than words. There are accents in the eye which are not on the tongue, and more tales come from pale lips than can enter an ear. It is both the grandeur and the pain of the remoter moods that they avoid the pathway of sound.

"FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD."—*T. Hardy.*

"TIME does not seem of the least consequence to most people," thought Margaret, "or money either, for that matter. I wonder if rich people dream how we covet what they waste of both." The remembrance of Susie, wearily tossing all alone through that half hour, came to her with a a pang. Sickness is nothing to the rich. It can't be half as much as it is to us, with all the care and anxiety it brings to poor people. I don't suppose it ever comes into their minds

what a blessing it is to be able to take care of those they love, and never have to leave them when they are suffering."

It certainly did not come into Margaret's, — for we see only one side of the picture at a time, — how much these cares distract from the dull wearing anxiety of those who sit by, powerless to aid, yet having nothing to call their thoughts from the suffering they witness! or, sadder still, how many are left to the care of a hireling, because that care can be purchased, with the ready excuse of health and spirits suffering from such close confinement!" Better the humble, self-sacrificing ministry of the poor, one to another, even though some necessities are hardly gained, and some comforts altogether wanting.

"LOSS AND GAIN."—*Mrs. Alice B. Haven.*

"If you want to be an angel in heaven, you must begin to plume your wings now, for it takes a long while to soar so high. Begin now, and be not afraid of falling."

"LINDA."—*Mrs. Caroline Lee Hentz.*

If each one had to tell the history of fifteen years in his or her life, could any one of us undertake to vouch for the correctness of the record? — that it should not be palliated by self-love, colored by fancy, softened by memory? — that the mercifully effacing hand of time should not have swept away much of the mere material? For him who should have led the most tranquil life in outward seeming, it would be a task of greater difficulty, if other than the outlines of that life-history were demanded, than from him whose way should have lain, not "in the plain below," but where "the wind is loudest, on the highest hills." The chronicle must in all cases imply the passing away of familiar faces; vacant places by the hearth and in the heart; wayside graves along the path of the journey; and those slow changes in one's self, which sometimes imperceptibly transform the individual, with his circumstances and surroundings, during such an interval as this. When one has to tell the history of fifteen years in the life of another, only

the salient points can be dwelt upon; the current of time has to be crossed on stepping-stones.

"THE BLOSSOMING OF AN ALOE."—*Mrs. Cashel Hoey.*

I DO not believe there can be such a thing as a truly religious life without prayer. The religious soul must hold converse and communion with the Infinite, or its religion cannot live. It may be the simple expression of gratitude and desire. It may be the prostration of the soul in worship and adoration. It may be the up-springing of the spirit in strong aspiration; but in some way or form there must be prayer, or religion dies. There must be an open way between the heart of man and the heart of the Infinite — a ladder that reaches from the pillow of stone to the pillars of the Throne, where angels may climb and angels may descend — or the religious life of the soul can have no ministry.

"ARTHUR BONNICASTLE."—*Dr. J. G. Holland.*

How the heart catches at the least assurance

of that which it longs to believe! Oh, dry and dusty earth of which we are made, how soon is it fired by the least spark of hope!

"THE FATE."—*G. P. R. James.*

"INDIFFERENCE to small neglects of duty leads to very serious errors; and voluntarily to choose for one's acquaintance those of whose habits we do not approve, is a willing exposure of ourselves to temptation."

"SKIRMISHING."—*Mrs. C. Jenkins.*

"HAPPINESS is no abstract, unchanging truth. What would make you happy now might make you wretched ten years hence; youth is made to wish and dream, and life to deny youth's dreams and wishes. And thank God it is so, else what a world of unquietness and passion and restlessness would this be."

"SYBIL'S SECOND LOVE."—*Julia Kavanagh.*

WITHOUT being sentimental or sensitive, a man may find it somewhat galling to realize that the great joy or the great sorrow that has be-

fallen him does not appear to interest his neighbors in the faintest degree; and the lack of sympathy in the first case is almost as vexatious as in the last.

"ANTEROS."—*Geo. Lawrence.*

AMONGST the strange situations in life, there are few stranger, or, in certain respects, more painful, than the meeting after long absence of those who, when they had parted years before, were on terms of closest intimacy, and who now see each other changed by time, with altered habits and manners, and impressed in a variety of ways with influences and associations which impart their own stamp on character.

It is very difficult at such moments to remember how far we ourselves have changed in the interval, and how much of what we regard as altered in another may not simply be the new standpoint from which we are looking, and thus our friend may be graver, or sadder, or more thoughtful, or, as it may happen, seem less reflec-

tive and less considerative than we have thought him, all because the world has been meantime dealing with ourselves in such wise that qualities we once cared for have lost much of their value, and others that we had deemed of slight account have grown into importance with us.

"LORD KILGOBBIN."—*Chas. Lever.*

VERY slight words and deeds may have a sacramental efficacy, if we can cast our self-love behind us, in order to say or do them.

"FELIX HOLT."—*Marian Evans Lewes.*

IF we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heart beat, and we should die of that roar which lies on the other side of silence. As it is, the quickest of us walk about well wadded with stupidity.

"MIDDLEMARCH."—*Marian Evans Lewes.*

WHEN the stricken person is slow to recover and look as if nothing had happened, the striker easily glides into the position of the aggrieved

party; he feels no bruise himself, and is strongly conscious of his own amiable behavior since he inflicted the blow.

"ROMOLA."—*Marian Evans Lewes.*

"I MAY never have the opportunity to tell him I am sorry."

"It will be told him for you, Ethel."

"I may have to pass my life without seeing him again."

"But not without One who loves you far more than Cousin Thomas does; who suffers with every pain experienced by your heart, and echoes every repentant sigh you heave. O Ethel!" with clasped hands, falling on her knees beside the bed; "do try to believe that He is by you at this very moment, hearing every word, reading each thought, and able by a breath to fulfill your dearest wishes if you make them known to Him."

"I have forgotten Him so long," said Lady Ethel in a low voice.

"He has never forgotten you, dear."

"But that makes it so much harder. How can I go to Him just because I want something, when I never remembered Him in my happiness? It seems so mean."

"Nothing can be mean, dear, that brings us to His feet. And it is so sweet, while kneeling there, to think that He knows everything. There is no occasion even to speak to Him; our tears are all the explanation that He needs."

"HER LORD AND MASTER."—*Florence Marryatt.*

"YOU have a wonderful power, Mervyn, of putting away from your thoughts anything you do not wish to think of, haven't you? It is a happy knack. But it is only a knack. I cannot give it a higher name. I have been thinking it is perhaps braver to look things firmly in the face than to put them so entirely away."

"THROWN TOGETHER."—*Florence Montgomery.*

"FALSEHOOD is never easy, dear Eleanor; people seize it as a shield, and it turns to a spear in

their hands, to pierce the bosoms it was meant to protect."

"STUART OF DUNLEATH."—*Hon. Mrs. Norton.*

LAST words and death-bed scenes occur oftener in books than in reality.

Last words are oftener the mutterings of some perhaps trivial dream, — the request for some comfort, or some change of pillows; the grateful recognition of some loved one, — than phrases which contain the full expression of the life-thought, or maxims which shall be the guidance of those who remain behind. Our lives, not our death-beds, most furnish these.

"GEORGY SANDON; OR, A LOST LOVE."—*Ashford Owen.*

"THE only true way to live in this world, constituted just as we are, is to make all our employments subserve the one great end and aim of existence, namely, to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever. But in order to do this, we must be wise task-masters, and not require of our-

selves what we cannot possibly perform. Recreation we must have. Otherwise, the strings of our soul, wound up to an unnatural tension, will break."

"STEPPING HEAVENWARD."—*Mrs. E. Prentiss.*

IT is one great characteristic of genius to do great things with little things.

"PEG WOFFINGTON."—*Chas. Reade.*

PASSING through the world's long picture-gallery, it is oftentimes not the great paintings, not the court ceremonials, not the huge sea-pieces, not the representations of battle-fields, not the important portraits and the historical incidents which are photographed on our memories, which are stamped on our mental retina so indelibly that through the years they are never forgotten. It is not the large finished pictures which we went out to see, which we took, perhaps, much notice of at the time, that stay with us and remain in our memories longest; rather

it is the figure of some beggar child, the little glimpse of woodland scenery, the barren bleakness of some desolate moor, the hopeless languor of a dying man's hand, — these are the trifles, which, God knows why, we carry away with us. The scenes of great account at which we have been present, on which we have gazed, in which, perchance, we have been actors, pale and fade away from the canvas of our brains ; but so long as memory remains, there are slight gestures and passing expressions which recur to us again and again, and which will recur, till life leaves us and the mould be heaped over the spot where we lie.

"FAR ABOVE RUBIES."—*Mrs. J. H. Riddell.*

THERE is nothing like religion lived out to open a heart closed against it.

"OPENING OF A CHESTNUT BURR."—*Rev. E. P. Roe.*

WHAT a heaven earth would be could we always appreciate all we have as keenly as we do when on the point of losing it !

"AGAINST TIME." *Alexander Innes Shand.*

I AM not aware that either she or Tasso Smith ever received for their misdeeds what the world calls punishment. But that any one is permitted to live on, unrepentant and unchecked, a life of selfishness, is perhaps, in the sight of a higher Wisdom, the greatest punishment of all.

"NEIGHBOR'S WIVES."—*J. T. Trowbridge.*

SHE came across some things that were cast aside as utterly worthless, and not a few that she hesitated to destroy, and finally put back again in their old places. How many such trifles we carry with us through life! — an end of ribbon, a few written lines, a faded flower, or some such insignificant memento! The article has lost all its real significance, for we forget it until chance drops it into our hands; but, why destroy it? Grant it a quiet resting-place where it has lain hitherto, because it was once dear to us. Those who come after us will make merry over such old odds and ends, and there will be short work with them one day.

"WHY DID HE NOT DIE?"—*Ad. Von. Volckhansen.*

"IT is like a fool to go back from what one has once begun."

"No, it is like a brave man, when one has begun wrong," said Friedel.

"DOVE IN THE EAGLE'S NEST."—*C. M. Yonge.*

Descriptions and Scenes.

EARLY SPRING.

THE spring was in our valley now, creeping first for shelter shyly in the pause of the blustering wind. There the lambs came bleating to her, and the orchis lifted up, and the thin dead leaves of clover lay for the new ones to spring through. Then the stiffest things that sleep, the stubby oak, and the saplin'd beech, dropped their brown defiance to her, and prepared for a soft reply. While her overeager children (who had started forth to meet her, through the frost and shower of sleet), catkin'd hazel, gold-gloved withy, youthful elder, and old woodbine, with all the tribe of good hedge-climbers (who must hasten while haste they may) — was there one

of them that did not claim the merit of coming first?

There she staid and held her revel, as soon as the fear of frost was gone; all the air was a fount of freshness, and the earth of gladness, and the laughing waters prattled of the kindness of the sun.

"LORNA DOONE."—*R. D. Blackmore.*

How do one's hopes take wing in this blossoming season! I look around me with a thrilling consciousness of coming enjoyment. The lawn, so lately withered and brown; is covered with a fresh velvet carpet of the softest, deepest green. The trees, in their holiday robes, and decked out with gay, fluttering trimmings, clap their hands for joy.

Not yet is nature's life-giving sap exhausted. I feel it in my veins. It rejuvenates me, as it does everything I see and hear. Hark! How brimful of it is that robin's song! And my canary, hanging out of my window, breathes the

subtle oxygen, and pipes a sweeter, madder lay than has gladdened me all winter long.

Hearing such music, gazing on such a landscape, I can be hopeful, trusting. Strengthen me, O Father, to wait thy time — even if I wait till the eternal morning dawns on my weary eyes. Let my blind human will fold its fluttering wings in thy presence. I would taste no cup of merely earthly joy. I ask for nothing that is unsweetened by thy love.

"ESPERANCE."—*Meta Lander.*

A FORTNIGHT of warm clear weather had extracted the last fang of frost, and there was already green grass in the damp hollows. Bluebirds picked the last year's berries from the cedar-trees, buds were bursting on the swamp-willows; the alders were hung with tassels, and a powdery, crimson bloom began to dust the bare twigs of the maple trees.

"STORY OF KENNETT."—*Bayard Taylor.*

MAY.—JUNE.

MAY.

It was now the middle of May, and the land was clothed in tender green, and filled with the sweet breath of sap, and bud, and blossom. The vivid emerald of the willow-trees, the blush of orchards, and the cones of snowy bloom along the woodsides, shone through and illumined even the days of rain.

"Story of Kennett."—*Bayard Taylor.*

JUNE.

How often in the days and years that followed did Hadassah recall that saying! Always

with the memory of the clear, warm June noon strong upon her, the shady road along which they drove slowly, the smell of wild thyme and brook-mint, and other fragrant grasses, as the wheels crushed the wayside herbage, even the bevies of yellow butterflies that whirled up like animated buttercups from the damp spots in the highway, to settle down upon like inviting patches a little way ahead.

"TRUE AS STEEL."—*Marion Harland.*

JULY.

It was in the very flush of summer, the ripe, rich month of July. The last of the hay had been carried, but tangled whisps of sweet-scented grass still hung here and there on the brambles of the dog-roses in the narrow lanes, where the wagons had been hard pushed to pass between luxuriant boundaries of sloe and blackberry, wild rose and woodbine. This particular July had begun with almost tropical splendor. The thermometer (there was only one in the village, by-the-way, at the post-office and chemist's shop) had been at eighty for the last week, and even after sunset there was a sultry heat like the atmosphere of a hot-house. This summer glow

was odorous with the spicy breath of the pines, the rich perfume of clove carnations, the more delicate scent of bean fields, and the sweet-pea hedges that brightened cottage gardens. For an utterly idle existence — the life of those pigs, for instance, which lay flat on their sides on the patch of grass before the farm-yard gate, and simply reveled in the sunshine — Hedingham in a hot summer was a most delicious place, a very valley of sensuous delights. But for the majority of mankind, who had to work hard, this weather was a trifle too warm. . . . . Happy those whose work lay on the hill-tops, when they could gaze on the wide, cool sea. Happier still, or so it seemed to the landsmen, the fishermen yonder far out upon the blue, whose brown sail flapped lazily in the faint summer wind.

"TAKEN AT THE FLOOD."—*Miss Braddon.*

EARLY AUTUMN.

A WONDROUSLY beautiful autumn, with mild golden days, and clear starry nights, brooded over the country. Everywhere summer roses bloomed in the gardens beside the asters, and the forests were very slow in decking themselves in brilliant hues. The air was so still that the floating threads of gossamer scarcely stirred, and when a leaf fell it remained just where it touched the ground. The birds of passage had paused in their migration, and chirped and twittered among the fields and hedges with their merry little voices, while in the evening the wild swans, which usually, long ere this time, had soared away on their strong white wings, called to each other along the shore.

"WHAT THE SWALLOW SANG."—*F. Spielhagen.*

OCTOBER.

It was a clear October day, warm with golden-tinted sunlight, the air scented from cut corn-fields and the neighboring cedar thickets, the outline of the forest trees about him defined, solid and dark, upon the grass at his feet, while the flying clouds overhead threw vapory waves of mist upon the sunny slopes of yellow stubble beyond, that came and faded over them, like mere dreams of shadow. . . . . .

The day deepened into noon; a thorough autumn day, gathering warmth, and color, and field-scents with every breath; a moist air stirred

the half-dried, red leaves overhead, and sent them rustling to their feet. A bird, whose nest was in the lilac bushes near, twittered and hopped on the fence fearlessly, so absolute was the silence of the two men who sat patiently watching, hour after hour.

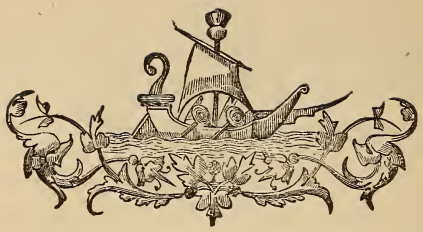
At length a floating cloud cooled and grayed the noonday, and just then a woman's clear laugh, followed by the roll of wheels, echoed along the shady, narrow lane.

"Waiting for the Verdict."—*Mrs. R. H. Davis.*

INDIAN SUMMER.

It was the balmiest of Indian summer days. The slight chill of the morning had melted into an atmosphere of purple and amber, perfumed with fallen leaves, whose gorgeous fragments were scattered everywhere along her path. An amethystine haze hung above and around the Highlands, casting a thin veil over the deep blue of the Hudson. The fields were brown, the forests lay like patches of gold and carmine on the hill-sides; no artist could hope to transcribe that melancholy splendor of coloring and tone; no heart, not in harmony with nature's and touched by sorrow, to feel the full influence of this pathetic beauty of blighted summer.

"Too True."—*Mrs. Victor.*

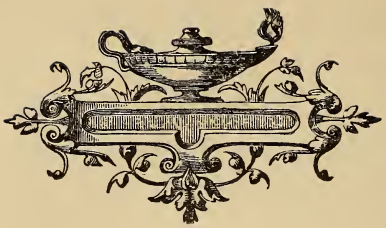


A WINTER NIGHT.

ARNE went to the other window, and looked out also. Indoors it was warm and quiet; outdoors it was cold, and a sharp wind swept through the vale, bending the branches of the trees, and making their shadows creep trembling on the snow. A light shone over from the parsonage, then vanished, then appeared again, taking various shapes and colors, as a distant light always seems to do when one looks at it long and intently. Opposite, the mountain stood dark, with deep shadow at its foot, where a thousand fairy tales hovered; but with its snowy

upper plains bright in the moonlight. The stars were shining, and northern lights were flickering in one quarter of the sky, but they did not spread. A little way from the window, down toward the water, stood some trees, whose shadows kept stealing over to each other; but the tall ash stood alone, writing on the snow.

"ARNE."—*Bjornson.*



BIRDS AND THE GREAT WINTER.

One thing struck me with some surprise, as I made off for our fireside (with a strong determination to heave an ash-tree up the chimney-place), and that was how the birds were going, rather than flying as they used to fly. All the birds were set in one direction, steadily journeying westward; not with any heat of speed, neither flying far at once; but all (as if on business bound) partly running, partly flying, partly fluttering along; silently, and without a voice, neither pricking head nor tail. This movement of the birds went on even for a week or more;

every kind of thrushes passed us, every kind of wild fowl; even plovers went away, and crows, and snipes, and woodcocks. And before half the frost was over, all we had in the snowy ditches were hares so tame that we could pat them; partridges that came to hand, with a dry noise in their crops; heath-poults, making cups of snow; and a few poor hopping red-wings, flipping in and out the hedge, having lost the power to fly. And all the time their great black eyes, set with gold around them, seemed to look at any man, for mercy and for comfort.

"LORNA DOONE."—*R. D. Blackmore.*

THE WINTER SUN.

When the sun burst forth at last upon that world of white, what he brought was neither warmth, nor cheer, nor hope of softening; only a clearer shaft of cold, from the violent depths of sky. Long-drawn alleys of white haze seemed to lead toward him, yet such as he could not come down, with any warmth remaining. Broad white curtains of the frost — fog looped around the lower sky, on the verge of hill and valley, and above the laden trees. Only round the sun himself, and the spot of heaven he claimed, clustered a bright purple-blue, clear, and calm, and deep.

"Lorna Doone."—*R. D. Blackmore.*

Snow-clad forest.

CHRISTMAS-TIME.

In the meantime Christmas was near at hand. He strode through the Thuringian forest clad in an icy coat of mail, and trailing his snow-cloak across the very thresholds and window-ledges of the low peasant cots; frosty tears hung upon his eyelashes, and the wind of his breath sent all genial life to take shelter behind thick walls and beneath roofs; but the crown of firs upon his dear and sacred brow shone like a royal diadem; the cold, wintry sun gleamed unveiled in the clear blue sky, awakening pale sparks in every icicle; and now, here and there, some young, slender evergreen is doomed to the axe, — there it stood, dreaming in its dim, wintry repose of growing tall and great, of the time when its

slender trunk would stretch aloft into the blue air, seeming to touch the golden stars with its topmost boughs, of the purple blossoms which would shine amid its branches, and, caressed by the warm sunlight, fling their beauty abroad into the world; — and suddenly it wakes, roused by a warm, genial atmosphere; its little boughs will never touch the skies, its crimson blossoms must always slumber, but surely the stars have fallen down from on high, and are glimmering upon its little branches, — the poor terrified fir has become a flower, the glowing, magic flower of the winter.

Oh, happy, blessed Christmas-time!

"Countess Gisela."—*E. Marlitt.*

DAYBREAK IN THE COUNTRY.

WHETHER she slept or not that night Bathsheba was not clearly aware. But it was with a freshened existence and a cooler brain that, a long time afterwards, she became conscious of some interesting proceedings which were going on in the trees above her head and around.

A coarse-throated chatter was the first sound.

It was a sparrow just waking.

Next: "Chee-weeze-weeze-weeze!" from another retreat.

It was a finch.

Third: "Tink-tink-tink-tink-a-chink!" from the hedge.

It was a robin.

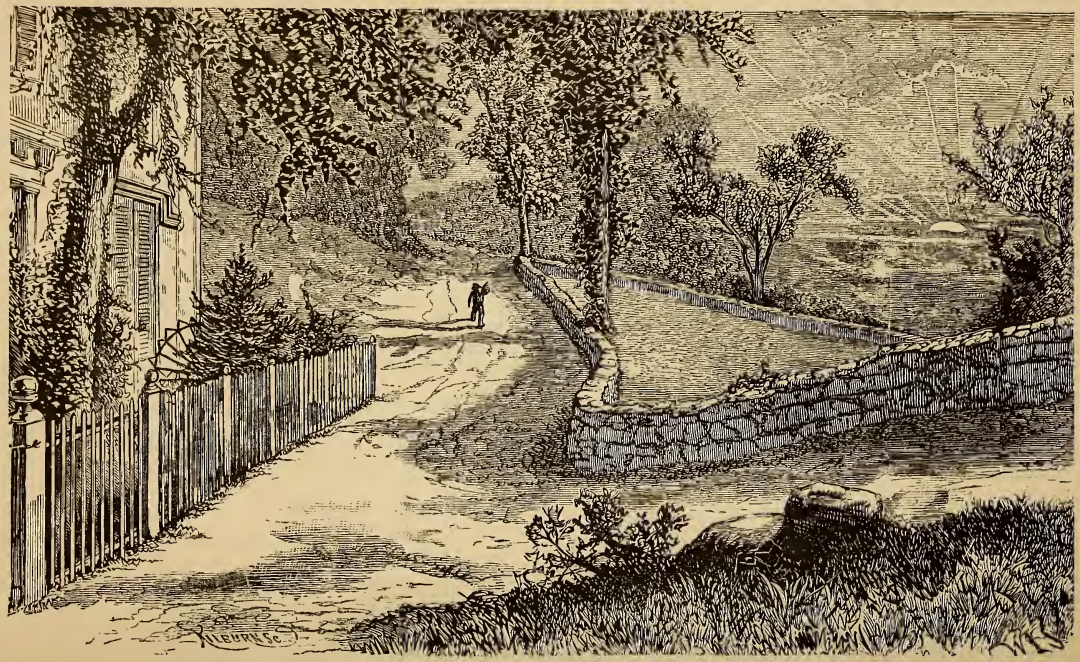
"Chuck-chuck-chuck!" overhead.

A squirrel.

Then, from the road, "With my ra-ta-ta, and my rum-tum-tum!"

It was a ploughboy. Presently he came opposite, and she believed from his voice that he was one of the boys on her own farm. He was followed by a shambling tramp of heavy feet, and, looking through the ferns, Bathsheba could just discern in the wan light of daybreak a team of her own horses. They stopped to drink at a pond on the other side of the way. She watched them flouncing into the pool, drinking, tossing up their heads, drinking again, the water dribbling from their lips in silver threads. There was another flounce, and they came out of the pond, and turned back again towards the farm.

"FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD."—*T. Hardy.*



Sunrise.

SUNRISE.

THE next morning he was awake at early dawn, hearing the birds at the window. He rose and went out. The air was clear and fresh as a new-made soul. Bars of mottled cloud were bent across the eastern quarter of the sky, which lay like a great ethereal ocean ready for the launch of the ship of glory that was now gliding towards its edge. Everything was waiting to conduct him across the far horizon to the south, where lay the stored-up wonder of his coming life. The lark sang of something greater than he could tell; the wind got up, whispered at it, and lay down to sleep again; the sun was at hand to bathe the world in the light and gladness alone

fit to typify the radiance of Robert's thoughts. The clouds that formed the shore of the upper sea were already burning from saffron into gold. A moment more and the insupportable sting of light would shoot from behind the edge of that low blue hill, and the first day of his new life would be begun. He watched, and it came. The well-spring of day, fresh and exuberant as if now first from the holy will of the Father of lights, gushed into the basin of the world, and the world was more glad than tongue or pen can tell. The heart alone, filled with the supernal light, can surpass the marvel of such a sunrise.

"Robert Falconer."—*George MacDonald.*

EARLY MORNING.

EARLY morning at Borva, fresh, luminous and rare; the mountains in the south grown pale and cloud-like under a sapphire sky; the sea ruffled into a darker blue by a light breeze from the west: and the sunlight lying hot on the red gravel and white shells around MacKenzie's house. There is an odor of sweetbrier about, hovering in the warm, still air, except at such times as the breeze freshens a bit, and brings round the shoulder of the hill the cold, strange scent of the rocks and the sea beyond.

"A PRINCESS OF THULE."—*William Black.*

SUNSET IN THE VALLEY.

It was an intensely picturesque scene that met Clandia's artist-eye as she reached the level, and then looked down into the little hollow scooped just over its lee shoulder. The sun was setting, and the gorse and heather were just changing from gold and purple into rosy grey. Beyond stretched a broad valley, with a lake-like river of dull silver in the middle distance, and beyond that a dark, softly-outlined chain of hills, and beyond that the evening glow. In front of all was the low tent, like the last touch of peace upon a peaceful scene, with three human figures to give human interest — the grey-haired gipsy blowing up his fire, the young man stripped to

the shirt and with bare arms standing by, and the little scarlet-hooded girl perched on the end of the rough stone wall, at whose feet the lurcher was basking in a dog's dream of a Valhalla of eternal hares. For sound, the rook's rearguard was coming restward, the grasshoppers were saying good-night, and the June beetles good-morning, while the brook was finding his quiet voice that was lost by day.

"ZELDA'S FORTUNE."—*R. E. Francillon.*

SUNSET IN THE FOREST.

THE sun was setting upon one of the rich grassy glades of that forest, which we have mentioned in the beginning of the chapter. Hundreds of broad-headed, short-stemmed, wide-branched oaks, which had witnessed, perhaps, the stately march of the Roman soldiery, flung their gnarled arms over a thick carpet of the most delicious greensward; in some places they were intermingled with beeches, hollies, and copsewood of various descriptions, so closely as totally to intercept the level beams of the sinking sun; in others, they receded from each other, forming those long sweeping vistas, in the

intricacy of which the eye delights to lose itself, while imagination considers them as the paths to get wilder scenes of silvan solitude. Here the red rays of the sun shot a broken and discolored light, that partially hung upon the shattered boughs and mossy trunks of the trees, and there they illuminated in brilliant patches the portions of turf to which they made their way.

"IVANHOE."—*Sir Walter Scott.*

SUNSET IN ITALY.

It was the hour at which Italians, whether on the doorsteps of narrow city alleys, or by wood-side, or field-side, or sea-side, so dearly love to come forth from the coverings of roofs, and enjoy the sweet influences of their delicious air and of the evening hour, — the hour of the Ave Maria, — the dear "ventiquattro," at which all toil ceases, and all the world may lawfully give itself to enjoyment. It seemed an hour which the still and melancholy Maremma might in a special manner claim as its own. The silent shores, the silent hills, the silent woods, gathered a special and expressive beauty from the lights peculiar to the dying hour of the day. Even the squalor of the miserable little town, burrowing in the sands,

seemed glorified into a semblance of beauty, or at least of harmony, with the other elements of the scene. But the outlook from the coast seaward was gorgeously and magnificently beautiful. The sun was falling into the western blue in unmitigated splendor; and the golden pathway through the darkening blue of the waters came up from the far west like an angel's path, straight to the spot on the shore on which two women were sitting. A little behind, and to the right hand of them, was what is called the town, and every pane of glass remaining in the western windows of it seemed a strongly burning fire, under the painting of the level rays. The entire outline of the western Island of the Lily was traced in burnished gold against a purple sky. And all the woods and crags of the nearer Monte Argentario were bathed in light of every hue, from delicate bloom like the pink of a rose, to deepest indigo, warning that the glory was quickly passing away.

"LEONORA CASALONI."—*T. Adolphus Trollope.*

NIGHT IN THE MOUNTAIN CHASM.

NIGHT supervened with the suddenness of a death which has been looked for, but which is at last a surprise. Shadow after shadow crept down the walls of the chasm, blurred its projections, darkened its faces, and crowded its recesses. The line of sky, seen through the jagged and sinuous opening above, changed slowly to gloom and then to blackness. There was no light in this rocky intestine of the earth except the red flicker of the camp-fire. It fought feebly with the powers of darkness; it sent tremulous despairing flashes athwart the swift ebony river; it reached out with momentary gleams to the nearer facades of precipice; it reeled, drooped, and shuddered as if in hopeless horror. Proba-

bly, since the world began, no other fire lighted by man had struggled against the gloom of this tremendous amphitheatre. The darknesses were astonished at it, but they were also uncomprehending and hostile. They refused to be dissipated, and they were victorious.

After two hours a change came upon the scene. The moon rose, filled the upper air with its radiance, and bathed in silver the slopes of the mountains. The narrow belt of visible sky resembled a milky way. The light continued to descend and work miracles. Isolated turrets, domes, and pinnacles, came out in gleaming relief against the dark-blue background of the heavens. The opposite crest of the canon shone with a broad illumination. All the uncouth demons and monsters of the rocks awoke, glaring and blinking, to menace the voyagers in the depths below. The contrast between this supereminent brilliancy and the sullen obscurity of the subterranean river made the latter seem more than ever like Styx or Acheron.

"OVERLAND."—*J. W. De Forest.*

A MORNING RAMBLE.

As SHE opened her door to go down-stairs, Oscar, who had been lying in wait for her on the mat, jumped up with his customary boisterous caresses, and then stalked off before her into the porch, as if inviting her to come out and taste the delicious May morning in all its dewy freshness. She followed, and stayed long, gazing up and down the dale, with that delicious, indefinable exhilaration throbbing at her heart which is, perhaps, youth's greatest riches. She felt obliged to give it expression, and said aloud to the stag-hound, who was gratefully snuffing up the warm air, as if he too enjoyed the change of weather,—

"I feel all glorious, Oscar! don't you?" to

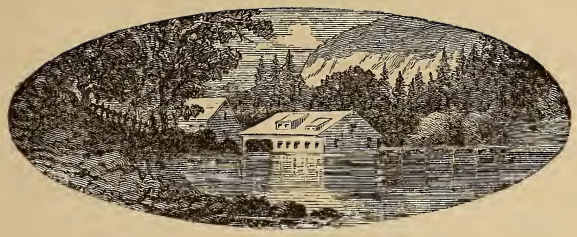
which he responded in dog fashion, with a short bark and a heavy flourish of his great tail.

. . . . . .

The footpath ran along under a hedgerow where the white May buds were just beginning to peep amongst the green, and beyond which lay a considerable tract of forest-land that had been thinned but never brought into cultivation, and where the low shrubs and gorse, that had since grown up very thickly, afforded a good cover for game. Margaret loitered by the way, gathering a posy of wild-flowers — speedwell, forget-me-not, primrose, dog-violet, and wood-anemone — which had a peculiar and dainty delight for her, as being the first she had culled that year. Oscar ranged over the fields, meantime, in a state of most glorious excitement: he had espied a young leveret, and when only in Margaret's company he considered himself free so give chase to whatever quarry appeared in view. His temptations became stronger still, when, on reaching Wildfoot — a lovely knoll

where Blackbeck made a sudden curve — the path diverged into the wood itself. His mistress led him by the ear part of the way, whether he would or no; but he shyly took advantage of a careless moment when she was looking up and trying, deftly enough, to imitate the whistling of a blackbird on a branch overhead, to break away from her and carry dismay into the bosoms of several promising families of young pheasants. It was through a narrow glade of nearly a quarter of a mile in length, between closely-planted fir-trees, that the pathway ran, and here and there shone about their roots clusters of pale primroses, as stars shine through a dark night. The mould was soft as a carpet, being composed of ages of fallen verdure, which gave out a pungent scent as the foot pressed it — a scent that always pervaded Margaret's after dreams of home.

"Sylvan Holt's Daughter."—*Holme Lee.*



EVENING WALKS.

THERE was somehow a great pleasantness to Sip about the nights when she had a walk with Dick; she neither understood nor questioned how; not a passion, only a pleasantness; she noticed that the stars were out; she was apt to hear the tiny trail of music that the cascades made above the dam; she saw twice as many lighted windows with the curtains up as she did when she walked alone; if the ground were wet, it did not trouble her, if the ground were dry, it had a cool touch upon her feet; if there were a geranium anywhere upon a window-sill, it pleased her; if a child laughed, she liked the sound; if

Catty had been lost since supper, she felt sure that they should find her at the next corner ; if she had her week's ironing to do when she got home, she forgot it ; if a rough word sprang to her lips, it did not drop ; if her head ached, she smiled ; if a boy twanged a jew's-harp, she could have danced to it ; if poor little Nynee Mell flitted jealously by with Jim, in her blue ribbons, she could sit down and cry softly over her,—such a gentleness there was about the night.

"The Silent Partner."—*E. S. Phelps.*

ON THE HILLS.

Ah, what a walk it was! What air over my head, what grass under my feet! The sweetness of the inner land and the crisp saltness of the distant sea were mixed in that delicious breeze. The short turf, fragrant with odorous herbs, rose and fell elastic underfoot. The mountain piles of white cloud moved in sublime procession along the blue field of heaven overhead. The wild growth of prickly bushes, spread in great patches over the grass, was in a glory of yellow bloom. On we went; now up, now down; now bending to the right, and now turning to the left. I looked about me. No house, no road, no paths, fences, hedges, walls; no landmarks of any sort. All round us, turn which way we might, nothing

was to be seen but the majestic solitude of the hills. No living creature appeared, but the white dots of sheep scattered over the soft green distance, and the sky-lark singing his hymn of happiness, a speck above my head.

"Poor Miss Finch."—*Wilkie Collins.*

ON THE LAKE.

THE word was given to go on; the oars dipped down again with measured motion, and the boatman chanted a plaintive ballad, which was half a hymn.

We sat with our hands linked together and our eyes fixed alternately upon the sky and the water.

Presently an eight-oared bark swept past us with a lantern at its prow. The rowers were merry; but their mirth jarred upon the sweet silence, and we answered not the shout with which they greeted us.

The shore seemed to come nearer and nearer — vague echoes came, and went, and wandered past — lights shimmered out, and were reflected in long wavering lines — and we glided, ghost-like, through the path of the moonlight.

Laurent passed his arm around me, and we both rose and looked back.

"See," he said, pointing to the glittering ripples, "see that silver track, laid like a pavement of stars along the lake! It is as if a conquering army had gone by laden with riches, and scattering the spoils of gold and jewels."

"Or as the path touched by the feet of One who walked of old along the surface of the ocean," I added, softly.

My husband bent down, and pressed his lips to my forehead.

"Dearest," he whispered, "I am content that your simile should be lovelier and holier than mine."

"THE LADDER OF LIFE."—*Amelia B. Edwards.*

LEGEND OF THE KNIGHT AND THE NYMPH OF THE FOUNTAIN.

So THE young Count narrated a myth of one of his progenitors, — he might have lived a century ago, or a thousand years, or before the Christian epoch, for anything that Donatello knew to the contrary, —who had made acquaintance with a fair creature belonging to this fountain. Whether woman or sprite was a mystery, as was all else about her, except her life and soul were somehow interfused throughout the gushing water. She was a fresh, cool, dewy thing, sunny and shadowy, full of pleasant little mischiefs, fitful and changeable with the whim of the moment, but yet as constant as her native

stream, which kept the same gush and flow forever, while marble crumbled over and around it. The fountain woman loved the youth,—a Knight, as Donatello called him, — for, according to the legend, his race was akin to hers. At least, whether kin or no, there had been friendship and sympathy of old betwixt an ancestor of his, with furry ears, and the long-lived lady of the fountain. And, after all those ages, she was still as young as a May morning, and as frolicsome as a bird upon a tree, or a breeze that makes merry with the leaves.

She taught him how to call her from her pebbly source, and they spent many a happy hour together, more especially in the fervor of the summer days. For often as he sat waiting for her by the margin of the spring, she would suddenly fall down around him in a shower of sunny rain-drops, with a rainbow glancing through them, and forthwith gather herself up into the likeness of a beautiful girl, laughing — or was it

the warble of the rill over the pebbles? — to see the youth's amazement.

Thus, kind maiden that she was, the hot atmosphere became deliciously cool and fragrant for this favored Knight; and, furthermore, when he knelt down to drink out of the spring, nothing was more common than for a pair of rosy lips to come up out of its little depths, and touch his mouth with the thrill of a sweet, cool, dewy kiss!

"It is a delightful story for the hot noon of your Tuscan summer," observed the sculptor, at this point. "But the deportment of the watery lady must have had a most chilling influence in midwinter. Her lover would find it, very literally, a cold reception."

"I suppose," said Donatello, rather sulkily, "you are making fun of the story. But I see nothing laughable in the thing itself, nor in what you say about it."

He went on to relate, that for a long while, the Knight found infinite pleasure and comfort in the friendship of the fountain nymph. In his

merriest hours, she gladdened him with her sportive humor. If ever he was annoyed with earthly trouble, she laid her moist hand upon his brow, and charmed the fret and fever quite away.

But one day — one fatal noontide — the young Knight came rushing with hasty and irregular steps to the accustomed fountain. He called the nymph; but — no doubt because there was something unnusual and frightful in his tone — she did not appear, nor answer him. He flung himself down, and washed his hands and bathed his feverish brow in the cool, pure water. And then, there was a sound of woe; it might have been a woman's voice; it might have been only the sighing of the brook over the pebbles. The water shrank away from the youth's hands, and left his brow as dry and feverish as before.

Donatello here came to a dead pause.

"Why did the water shrink from this unhappy Knight?" inquired the sculptor.

"Because he had tried to wash off a blood-stain!" said the young count in a horror-stricken

whisper. "The guilty man had polluted the pure water. The nymph might have comforted him in sorrow, but could not cleanse his conscience of a crime."

"And did he never behold her more?" asked Kenyon.

"Never but once," replied his friend. "He never beheld her blessed face but once again, and then there was a blood-stain on the poor nymph's brow; it was the stain his guilt had left in the fountain where he tried to wash it off. He mourned for her his whole life long, and employed the best sculptor of the time to carve this statue of the nymph from his description of her aspect. But, though my ancestry would fain have had the image wear her happiest look, the artist, unlike yourself, was so impressed with the mournfulness of the story, that, in spite of his best efforts, he made her forlorn, and forever weeping, as you see!"

Kenyon found a certain charm in this simple legend. Whether so intended or not, he under-

stood it as an apologue, typifying the soothing and genial effects of an habitual intercourse with nature, in all ordinary cares and griefs; while, on the other hand, her mild influences fall short in their effect upon the ruder passions, and are altogether powerless in the dread fever-fit or deadly chill of guilt.

"THE MARBLE FAUN."—*Nathaniel Hawthorne.*

THE FALLS OF MONTMORENCI.

From the gate opening into the grounds about the fall two or three little French boys, whom they had not the heart to forbid, ran noisily before them with cries in their sole English, "This way, sir!" and led toward a weather-beaten summer-house that tottered upon a projecting rock above the verge of the cataract. But our tourists shook their heads, and turned away for a more distant and less dizzy enjoyment of the spectacle, though any commanding point was sufficiently chasmal and precipitous. The lofty bluff was scooped inward from the St. Lawrence in a vast irregular semicircle, with cavernous hollows, one within another, sinking far into

its sides, and naked from foot to crest, or meagerly wooded here and there with evergreen. From the central brink of these gloomy purple chasms the foamy cataract launched itself, and like a cloud, —

"Along the cliff to fall and pause and fall did seem."

I say a cloud, because I find it already said to my hand, as it were, in a pretty verse, and because I must needs liken Montmorenci to something that is soft and light. Yet a cloud does not represent the glinting of the water in its downward swoop; it is like some broad slope of sun-smitten snow; but snow is coldly white and opaque, and this has a creamy warmth in its luminous mass; and so, there hangs the cataract unsaid as before. It is a mystery that anything so grand should be so lovely, that anything so tenderly fair in whatever aspect should yet be so large that one glance fails to comprehend it all. The rugged wildness of the cliffs and hollows about it is softened by its gracious beauty, which

half redeems the vulgarity of the timber-merchant's uses in setting the river at work in his saw-mills and choking its outlet into the St. Lawrence with rafts of lumber and rubbish of slabs and shingles. Nay, rather, it is alone amidst these things, and the eye takes note of a separate effort.

Our tourists sank down upon the turf that crept with its white clover to the edge of the precipice, and gazed dreamily upon the fall, filling their vision with its exquisite color and form. Being wiser than I, they did not try to utter its loveliness; they were content to feel it, and the perfection of the afternoon, whose low sun slanting over the landscape gave, under that pale, greenish-blue sky, a pensive sentiment of autumn to the world. The crickets cried amongst the grass; the hesitating chirp of birds came from the tree overhead; a shaggy colt left off grazing in the field and stalked up to stare at them; their little guides, having found that these people had no pleasure in the sight of small boys

scuffling on the verge of a precipice, threw themselves also down upon the grass and crooned a long, long ballad in a mournful minor key about some maiden whose name was La Belle Adeline. It was a moment of unmixed enjoyment for every sense.

"THEIR WEDDING JOURNEY."—*W. D. Howells.*

THE CASCADES.

THE pines, the clover slopes, the dam, the streets and houses, the very sky, everything, in fact, in Fire Falls, except those babies of cascades, wears, upon a summer morning, that air of having gone or of having been wearily to sleep, — an air of having been upon its feet eleven hours and a half yesterday, and of expecting to be upon its feet eleven hours and a half to-day. . . . . .

Only those tiny cascades play — eternal children — upon a mother's bosom; as if the heart of a little child, just for being the heart of a little child, must somehow, somewhere, play forever in the smile of an undying morning.

"THE SILENT PARTNER."—*E. S. Phelps.*

A RAINY DAY.

PEOPLE who live in cities, think, perhaps, they know what a rainy day is; a day when there will be no visitors, and the bell-wire has comparative rest; when they can sit in wrappers if they like, and read books, or write letters, or do queer, stormy-weather work that they would not bring out in the sunshine; when the streets seem to them, deserted, although there is yet the rattle of incessant carriages, bearing people who must go and cannot walk; and a continual bob of shiny umbrella-tops up before the parlor windows. They feel very safe and alone; nobody will come. But they know nothing of the utter quietude of a rainy day in-doors, among the hills, and of the

still noise out. When the drops come down with their soft sweep and whisk among the leaves and grass; when nobody goes up and down the road; when the oxen are all housed, and the farmers busy in their barns; when the very chickens run under the fences and brush-pile, and only the ducks are abroad and gay.

"The Gayworthys."—*Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.*

THE CLEARING OF THE THREATENED STORM.

But this race to escape the storm was needless, for they were just getting within sight of Barvas when a surprising change came over the dark and thunderous afternoon. The hurrying masses of cloud in the west parted for a little space, and there was a sudden and fitful glimmer of a stormy blue sky. Then a strange soft yellow and vaporous light shot across to the Barvas hills, and touched up palely the great slopes, rendering them distant, ethereal and cloud-like. Then a shaft or two of wild light flashed down upon the landscape beside them. The cattle shone red in the brilliant green pastures. The gray rocks glowed in their setting of moss. The stream going by Barvas Inn was

a streak of gold in its sandy bed. And then the sky above them broke into great billows of cloud — tempestuous and rounded masses of golden vapor that burned with the wild glare of the sunset. The clear spaces in the sky widened, and from time to time the wind sent ragged bits of yellow cloud across the shining blue. All the world seemed to be on fire, and the very smoke of it, the majestic masses of vapor that rolled by overhead, burned with a bewildering glare. Then, as the wind still blew hard, and kept veering round again to the north-west, the fiercely-lit clouds were driven over one by one, leaving a pale and serene sky to look down on the sinking sun and the sea. The Atlantic caught the yellow glow on its tumbling waves, and a deeper color stole across the slopes and peaks of the Barvas hills. Whither had gone the storm? There were still some banks of clouds away up in the north-east, and in the clear green of the evening sky they had their distant grays and purples faintly tinged with rose.

"A Princess of Thule."—*William Black.*

A SABBATH IN TIME OF WAR.

THROUGH that long, azure-golden morning — a morning so absolutely perfect in the blending of its elements, in its fusion of fragrance, light, and color, that it can never die out of my consciousness, I sat by this open window making bandages. Directly before me across the Shenandoah towered the London mountain. Where the great trees had fallen on its summit I knew that the enemy was at work ranging his batteries. The red flags of our hospitals, hoisted high above their chimneys, streamed toward this foe, imploring mercy for our sick and wounded ones. The

stony streets of Camp Hill throbbed with unwonted life. Many soldiers were hurrying to and from the hillside spring with their black coffee kettles, eager to get their day's supply of fresh water before the bomb-shells grew thicker in the air. Many strangers, refugees from Martinsburg and Winchester, paced up and down the street. Citizens at the corners discussed the probabilities of the day with troubled faces. Young girls and matrons toiled up the steep Camp Hill side to our hospital laden with baskets of delicacies, mindful of the suffering soldier amid all their fears. Poor contrabands stood in groups talking in incoherent terror of Jackson, and of the certainty of their being "cotched and sold down South." In a high yard opposite a company of little children were rolling in the grass amid the late-blooming flowers, utterly unconscious of the impending storm about to burst upon their innocent heads. The atmosphere was pierced with the deep trill of insect melody. Golden butterflies flickered by me on flame-like

wings. The thistle-down sailed on through seas of sunshine. The spider spun his web in the tree beside my window. The roll of the rivers rhymed with the music of the air. Nature rested in deep content. The day, serene enough for Paradise, murmured, "Peace." God from the benign heavens said, "It is my Sabbath."

"EIRENE, OR A WOMAN'S RIGHT."—*Mrs. Mary Clemmer Ames.*

MORNING-GLORIES.

"When I was a girl — it was a long, sweet time ere I came to Martindale, Miss Fuller!—I used to have morning-glories all round the fences to my father's yard; that was such a long while ago. Blue! and purple! and pink! and white!" She enumerated with an emphasis which Mr. Carradine, who stopped as he came within the gate, smiled to hear, and he went on to the house with the smile still on his face, as if he had looked into the heart, just then, of a white morning-glory.

"Peter Carradine."—*Caroline Chesebro'*.

THE FARM.

At length, on a gentle declivity facing the South, they espied in the distance the low, long, whitewashed farm-house of Fardorongha Donovan. There was little of artificial ornament about the place, but much of the rough, heart-stirring wildness of nature, as it appeared in a strong, vigorous district, well cultivated, but without being tamed down by those finer and more graceful touches which now-a-days mark the skillful hand of the scientific agriculturist.

To the left waved a beautiful hazel glen, which gradually softened away into the meadows above mentioned. Up behind the house stood an ancient plantation of whitethorn, which, during the month of May, diffused its fragrance, its beauty,

and its melody, over the whole farm. The plain garden was hedged round by the graceful poplar, while here and there were studded over the fields either single trees or small groups of mountain ash, a tree still more beautiful than the former. The small dells about the farm were closely covered with blackthorn and holly, with an occasional oak shooting up from some little cliff, and towering sturdily over its lowly companions. Here grew a thick interwoven mass of dog-tree, and upon a wild hedgerow, leaning like a beautiful wife upon a rugged husband, might be seen, supported by clumps of blackthorn, that most fragrant and exquisite of creepers, the delicious honeysuckle. Add to this the neat appearance of the farm itself, with its meadows and cornfields waving to the soft, sunny breeze of summer, and the reader may admit that, without possessing any striking features of pictorial effect, it would, nevertheless, be difficult to find an up-lying farm upon which the eye could rest with greater satisfaction.

"Fardorongha, the Miser."—*William Carleton.*

THE DREARY ROOM.

GABRIEL and May walked into the little parlor. It was dark and formal. There was a black haircloth sofa, with wooden edges all over it, so that nobody could lean or lounge, or do anything but sit uncomfortably upright. There were black haircloth chairs, a table with two or three books; two lamps with glass drops upon the mantle; a thin, cheap carpet; gloom, silence, and a complicated smell of greese — as if the ghosts of all the wretched dinners that had ever been cooked in the house haunted it spitefully.

"TRUMPS."—*Geo. Wm. Curtis.*

THE MOTHER'S DRESS.

I COULD not tell her it was mother's wedding-dress. Rich people, who can buy everything they want immediately they want it, at any shop, and throw it aside when they get tired, can have no idea of the little loving sacrifices, the tender plannings, the self-denials, the willing toils, the tearful pleasures, that are interwoven into the household possessions of the poor. To Evelyn, my wardrobe was a bad copy of the fashions; — to me, every bit of it was a bit of home, sacred with mother's thoughts, contriving for me night and day, with the touch of her busy fingers working for me, with the quiet delight in her eyes as she surveyed me at last arrayed in them, and smoothed down the folds with her delicate neat hands, and then contemplated me from a distance with a combination of the satisfaction of a mother in her child and an artist in his finished work.

"DIARY OF KITTY TREVELYAN."—*Mrs. Elizabeth Charles.*

THE FAMILY RECEIPT-BOOK.

THEN there were the family receipt-books, which had a quaint poetry of their own. I must confess, in the face of the modern excellent printed manuals of cookery and housekeeping, a tenderness for the old-fashioned receipt-books of our mothers and grandmother's, yellow with age, where in their own hand-writing are the records of their attainments and discoveries in the art of making life healthful and charming. There was a loving carefulness about these receipts — an evident breathing of human experience and family life — they were entwined with so many associations of the tastes and habits of individual members of the family, that the reading of my mother's receipt-book seemed to bring back all the old pictures of home-life; and this precious manual she gave to Eva, who forthwith resolved to set up one of her own on the model of it.

"MY WIFE AND I."—*Mrs. H. B. Stowe.*

MAKING BOOK-MARKS.

THEN Miss Yetton busied herself over a set of book-marks with a wild flower for every day of the year, half of April filled with violets, white and blue, the Alpine pedate, and the bright road-side freak of the golden yellow, while for love she slipped among them that other, an atom of summer midnight, double, says some one, as a little rose, the only blue rose we shall ever have; and for the days whereon no blossom burst, she had a tip of tiny hemlock cones, the moss from an old stone, a bunch of berries forsaken by the birds, some silky seedling unstripped by the rude breezes. In all these treasures there was no flaw; the harebell shaking in the wind and tan-

gled among its grasses, the wild rose whose root so few rains had washed that there had settled a deep color in its cup, the cardinal with the very glitter of the stream it loves meshed like a silver mist behind its scarlet sheen, those slip-shod little anemones that cannot stop to count their petals, but take one from their neighbors, or leave another behind them, all the tiny, stellate things, wherein the constant crystallic force of the ancient earth steals into light, the radiant water-lily; these held no dead pressed beauty, but the very spirit and springing life of the flower. Upon them, too, she lavished fancy; among the sprays little hands appeared to help the climbing vine, here a humming-bird and a scarlet rock columbine seemed taking flight together; then a wasp with the purple enamel of armor on his wing tilted against some burly husbandman of a bee to seek the good graces of the hooded nymph in an arethusa.

"AZARIAN."—*Mrs. Harriet Prescott Spofford.*

THE MUSICIAN.

He listened one moment more to the stream, then drew the bow across the strings. The music thrilled out upon the silence, catching the song of the brook in harmony as Goethe caught it in verse, — all its fresh delicious babble, all its rush of silvery sound, all its cool and soothing murmur, all its pauses of deep rest. All of which the woodland torrent told — of the winds that had tossed the boughs into its foam; of the women-faces its tranquil pools had mirrored; of the blue burden of forget-me-nots and the snowy weight of lilies it had borne so lovingly; of the sweet familiar idyls it had seen where it had wound its way below quaint mill-house walls

choked up with ivy growth, where the children and the pigeons paddled with rosy feet upon the resting wheel; of the weary sighs that had been breathed over it beneath the gray old convents where it heard the *miserere* steal in with its own ripple, and looked itself a thing so full of leaping joy and dancing life to the sad eyes of girl-recluses, — all these of which it told the music told again. The strings were touched by an artist's hand, and all that duller ears heard, but dimly, in the splash and surge of the brown fern-covered stream, he heard in marvelous poems and translated into clearer tongue — the universal tongue which has no country and no limit, and in which the musician speaks alike to sovereign and to savage.

"TRICOTRIN."—*Ouida.*

SYMPATHY.

An ugly woman, very poorly clothed, hurried in while I was glancing at them, and coming straight up to the mother, said, "Jenny! Jenny!" The mother rose on being addressed, and fell upon the woman's neck.

She also had upon her face and arms the marks of ill-usage. She had no kind of grace about her, but the grace of sympathy; but when she condoled with the woman, and her own tears fell, she wanted no beauty. I say condoled, but her only words were "Jenny, Jenny!" All the rest was in the tone in which she said them.

I thought it very touching to see these two women, coarse and shabby and beaten, so united;

to see what they could be to one another; to see how they felt for one another; how the heart of each to each was softened by the hard trials of their lives. I think the best side of such people is almost hidden from us. What the poor are to the poor is little known excepting to themselves and God.

"BLEAK HOUSE."—*Dickens.*

CHRISTIE'S CONSOLATION.

DAVID'S room had been her refuge when those dark hours came, and sitting there one day trying to understand the great mystery that parted her from David, she seemed to receive an answer to her many prayers for some sign that death had not estranged them. The house was very still, the window open, and a soft south wind was wandering through the room with hints of May-flowers on its wings. Suddenly a breath of music startled her, so airy, sweet, and short-lived, that no human voice or hand could have produced it. Again and again it came, a fitful and melodious sigh, that to one made superstitious by much sorrow, seemed like a spirit's voice delivering some message from another world.

Christie looked and listened with hushed breath and expectant heart, believing that some special answer was to be given her. But in a moment she saw it was no supernatural sound, only the south wind whispering in David's flute that hung beside the window. Disappointment came first, then warm over her sore heart flowed the tender recollection that she used to call the old flute "David's voice," for into it he poured the joy and sorrow, unrest and pain, he told no living soul. How often it had been her lullaby, before she learned to read its language; how gaily it had piped for others; how plaintively it had sung for him, alone and in the night; and now how full of pathetic music was that hymn of consolation fitfully whispered by the wind's soft breath.

Ah, yes! this was a better answer than any supernatural voice could have given her; a more helpful sign than any phantom face or hand; a surer confirmation of her hope than subtle argument or sacred promise: for it brought back the

memory of the living, loving man so vividly, so tenderly, that Christie felt as if the barrier was down, and welcomed a new sense of David's nearness with the softest tears that had flowed since she closed the serene eyes whose last look had been for her.

"WORK."—*Louisa M. Alcott.*

THE PRAYER.

She kissed Magdalen and then went from the room and down the hall toward the door, which Magdalen had heard open and shut so many times. Magdalen *was* very tired, and was soon sleeping so soundly that she did not hear Alice when she came back, but she dreamed there were angels with her clad in white, and with a start she woke to find the moonlight streaming into her chamber, and making it so light that she could see distinctly the young girl in the adjoining room was kneeling by the bed, her hands clasped together and her upturned face bathed in the silvery light, which made it like the face of

an angel. She was praying softly, and in the deep stillness of the night every whisper was audible to Magdalen, who heard her asking Heaven for strength to bear the *burden* patiently, and never to get tired and weary and wish it somewhere else. Then the nature of the prayer changed, and Magdalen knew that Alice was thanking Heaven for sending her to Beechwood. "And if anywhere in the world there are still living the friends she has never known, oh, Father, let her find them, especially her mother,—it is so terrible to have no mother."

That was what Alice said, and Magdalen's tears fell like rain to hear this young girl pleading for her as she had never pleaded for herself. She had prayed, it is true. She always prayed, both morning and at night, but they were mere formal prayers, and not at all like Alice's. Hers were earnest, hers were heartfelt, and Magdalen knew that she was speaking to a real, living presence; that the Saviour to whom she talked was there with her in the moonlit room as really

as if she saw him bodily. Alice's was a living faith, which brought Heaven down to her side, and Magdalen felt that there *were* indeed angels abiding round about her, and that Alice was one of them.

"MILLBANK."—*Mrs. Mary J. Holmes.*

THE SHINING LIGHT.

It was odd, no doubt, to choose an old colored woman for my adviser; but indeed I had not much choice; and something had given me a confidence in Maria's practical wisdom, which, early as it had been formed, nothing ever happened to shake. So, after considering the fire and the matter a moment, I brought forth my doubt.

"Maria," said I, "what is the best way — I mean, how can one let one's light shine?"

"What Miss Daisy talking about?"

"I mean, — you know what the Bible says — 'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven'?"

"For sure I knows dat. Aint much shinin' in

dese yere parts. De people is dark, Miss Daisy; dey don' know. 'Spect dey would try to shine, some on 'em, ef dey knowed. Feel sure dey would."

"But that is what I wanted to ask about, Maria. How ought one to let one's light shine?"

I remember now the kind of surveying look the woman gave me. I do not know what she was thinking of; but she looked at me, up and down, for a moment, with a wonderfully tender, soft expression. Then she turned away.

"How let um light shine?" she repeated. "De bestest way, Miss Daisy, is fur to make him burn good."

I saw it all immediately; my question never puzzled me again. Take care that the lamp is trimmed; take care that it is full of oil; see that the flame mounts clear and steady towards heaven; and the Lord will set it where its light will fall on what pleases him, and where it will reach, mayhap, to what you never dream of.

"DAISY."—*Miss Warner.*

"SILENCE A LA MORT!"

"Silence a la mort!"

The phrase leaped into her mind as if it had been repeated audibly in her ear, and with it a story Max had read to her and Violet in his last vacation, of an officer in the secret service of the First Emperor, who, in carrying out a confidential order of his sovereign, was arrested and court-martialed upon suspicion of treasonable correspondence with the enemy. The Emperor presided at the court, and when the sentence of disgrace and imprisonment was passed, the faithful emissary cast one glance of agonized appeal at the calm, severe face of his demi-god. There

was no sign of compassion or remorseful memory, and the brave servant's heart and reason failed him together. He lived for years longer, but thenceforward spoke but one sentence — the words which had been the parting admonition of the iron-hearted chief in their private interview.

"Silence a la mort!"

Hadassah thought out the motto and the tale; remembered how the sunbeams wove a halo in Maxwell's hair, and flecked his book as the three comrades sat on the rustic bench in the grape-walk; how the leaves had rustled overhead and the robins twittered to their young in the old apple-tree behind them; how cool and lovely Violet had looked in her thin blue lawn; how like a young Apollo her lover; saw it all — a picture, bright, peaceful, and present — by the time Miss Mahala seized her arm, pulled her into the store-room, and shut out the sight of the crowd.

"TRUE AS STEEL."—*Marion Harland.*

IN THE GRAVE-YARD.

She was looking at a humble stone which told of a young man who had died at twenty-three years old, fifty-five years ago, when she heard a faltering step approaching, and looking round saw a feeble woman bent with the weight of years, who tottered to the foot of that same grave and asked her to read the writing on the stone. The old woman thanked her when she had done, saying that she had had the words by heart for many a long, long year, but could not see them now.

"Were you his mother?" said the child.

"I was his wife, my dear."

She the wife of a young man of three-and-twenty! Ah, true! It was fifty-five years ago.

"You wonder to hear me say that," remarked the old woman, shaking her head. "You're not the first. Older folk than you have wondered at the same thing before now. Yes, I was his wife. Death doesn't change us more than life, my dear."

"Do you come here often?" asked the child.

"I sit here very often in the summer-time," she answered; "I used to come here once to cry and mourn, but that was a weary while ago, bless God!

"I pluck the daisies as they grow, and take them home," said the old woman after a short silence. "I like no flowers so well as these, and haven't for five-and-fifty years. It's a long time, and I'm getting very old!"

Then growing garrulous upon a theme which was new to one listener though it were but a child, she told her how she had wept and moaned and prayed to die herself, when this happened;

and how when she first came to that place, a young creature strong in love and grief, she had hoped that her heart was breaking as it seemed to be. But that time passed by, and although she continued to be sad when she came there, still she could bear to come, and so went on until it was pain no longer, but a solemn pleasure, and a duty she had learned to like. And now that five-and-fifty years were gone, she spoke of the dead man as if he had been her son or grandson, with a kind of pity for his youth, growing out of her own old age, and an exalting of his strength and manly beauty as compared with her own weakness and decay; and yet she spoke about him as her husband too, and thinking of herself in connection with him, as she used to be and not as she was now, talked of their meeting in another world, as if he were dead but yesterday, and she, separated from her former self, were thinking of the happiness of that comely girl who seemed to have died with him.

"Old Curiosity Shop."—*Dickens.*

IN THE CONVENT GARDEN.

KITTY stole off to explore the chamber given her at the rear of the house; that is to say, she opened the window looking out on what their hostess told her was the garden of the Ursuline Convent, and stood there in a mute transport. A black cross rose in the midst, and all about this wandered the paths and alleys of the garden, through clumps of lilac-bushes and among the spires of hollyhocks. The grounds were enclosed by high walls in part, and in part by the group of the Convent edifices, built of grey stone, high gabled, and topped by dormer-windowed

steep roofs of tin, which, under the high morning sun, lay an expanse of keenest splendor, while many a grateful shadow dappled the full-foliaged garden below. Two slim, tall poplars stood against the gable of the chapel, and shot their tops above its roof, and under a porch near them two nuns sat motionless in the sun, black-robed, with black veils falling on their shoulders, and their white faces lost in the white linen that draped them from breast to crown. Their hands lay quiet in their laps, and they seemed unconscious of the other nuns walking in the garden-paths with little children, their pupils, and answering their laughter from time to time with voices as simple and innocent as their own. Kitty looked down upon them all with a swelling heart. . . . . She shaded her eyes for a better look, when the noonday gun boomed from the citadel; the bell upon the chapel jangled harshly, and those strange maskers, those quaint black birds with white breasts and faces, flocked indoors.

"A Chance Acquaintance."—*W. D. Howells.*

IN THE SWING.

GEORGE, although comfortably established in the Morgan study, was also tired of waiting, and found the house unusually dull. For some time past he had been listening to a measured creaking noise in the garden; then came a peal of bells from the steeple; and he went to the window and looked out. The garden was full of weeds and flowers, with daisies on the lawn, and dandelions and milkwort among the beds. It was not trimly kept, like the garden at home; but George, who was the chief gardener, thought it a far pleasanter place, with its breath of fresh breeze, and its bit of blue over-roof. For flowers,

there were blush roses, nailed against the wall, that Rhoda used to wear in her dark hair sometimes, when there were no earwigs in them; and blue flags, growing in the beds among spiked leaves, and London pride, and Cape Jessamine, very sweet upon the air, and also ivy, creeping in a tangle of leaves and tendrils. The garden had been planted by the different inhabitants of the old brown house — each left a token. There was a medlar-tree, with one rotten medlar upon a branch, beneath which John Morgan would sit and smoke his pipe in the sun, while his pupils construed Greek upon the little lawn. Only Carlo was there now, stretching himself comfortably in the dry grass (Carlo was one of Bunch's puppies, grown up to be of a gigantic size and an unknown species). Tom Morgan's tortoise was also basking upon the wall. The creaking noise went on after the chimes had ceased, and George jumped out of window on to the water-butt to see what was the matter. He had forgotten the swing. It hung from a branch of the medlar-tree

to the trellis, and a slim figure, in a limp cotton dress, stood clinging to the rope — a girl with a black cloud of hair falling about her shoulders. George stared in amazement. Rhoda had stuck some vine leaves in her hair, and had made a long wreath, that was hanging from the swing, and that floated as she floated. She was looking up with great wistful eyes, and for a minute she did not see him. As the swing rose and fell, her childish wild head went up above the wall and the branches against the blue, and down "upon a background of pure gold," where the Virginian creeper had turned in the sun. George thought it was a sort of tune she was swinging, with all those colors round about her in the sultry summer day.

"Old Kensington."—*Anne Isabella Thackeray.*

IN THE CARS.

She awoke after an hour or two, rested and refreshed, and, still lying back in her corner, began to scan the passengers within the range of her vision with the curious eyes of one who has seen little of the world. They were all uninteresting, even to her active fancy, with the exception of a party just before her, and a jimber-jawed woman in a black bonnet, over the way, who had come from New Hampshire alone, and was pouring the story of her troubles in regard to some error in her ticket, as well as various side issues, into the sympathizing ear of a questionable-looking young man, who occupied the

seat before her. Various bits of this confidence floated into Katey's ears, as well as the amused "Just so, just so, ma'am," of the young man. The woman had a flurried, nervous manner, and grasped with both hands a very large paper parcel lying in her lap; but though her story went on in a shrill, penetrating voice, without cessation, she yet had eyes and ears for everything about her, and was constantly being overcome with gratitude for what she considered personal favors. "No, I thank you, my dear;" to the itinerant ice-water boy. "But how very kind it was of him to think of it!" she soliloquized. She apologized to the vender of books for not buying his wares, assuring him that they looked "very pretty, but, you see, I don't find much time to read, any way, and I expect to be tolerably busy where I am going." She exhausted the patience of the meek-faced conductor by her repeated questions, assuring him, at the end of each colloquy, that she had traveled all the way from New Hampshire alone. There came a

change, however; the meek-faced conductor disappeared at some cross-road, and an official of enormous proportions and a decidedly military air took his place. He slammed the door after him, as he entered the car, with the mildness of a clap of thunder. He ejaculated, "Tickets!" like a startling sneeze. Every sleepy eye opened wide. Every hand involuntarily grasped its bit of pasteboard, offering it abjectly at his approach. Not so the jimber-jawed woman. She raised her voice above the noise of the train as he drew near, and began her story:—

"I've come all the way from —"

He seized her ticket, gave it a violent and and vicious punch, thrust it into her hand again, was half way down the aisle before she had succeeded in uttering New Hampshire.

"Well!" She stared after him in a bewildered way, straightening the black bonnet, which had become displaced as though it had shrunk back of its own accord at the approach of this awful personage. But she was neither discouraged nor

dismayed. She bided her time. He came again. There was a perceptible hush throughout the car, a spasmodic clutching of tickets at that resounding slam of the door. Then the jimber-jawed woman rose and leaned forward, a feeble simper called up by some instinct of feminine consciousness spreading over her countenance. "Snap, snap:" the Great Mogul drew near. She opened her mouth as he turned towards her with an outstretched, impatient hand. "I've come all the way —" Suddenly he seemed to swell and fill the place. His face was awful to contemplate. He raised one finger. "Sit down!" he ejaculated, in a voice of thunder; and a confused heap of black bonnet and brown paper parcel dropped speechless upon the seat. The jimber-jawed woman was conscious of the real presence at last.

"KATHERINE EARLE."—*Adeline Trafton.*

"LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM."

WHAT an idle time it was! What an unsubstantial, happy, foolish time it was!

When I measured Dora's finger for a ring that was to be made of forget-me-nots, and when the jeweler, to whom I took the measure, found me out, and laughed over his order-book, and charged me anything he liked, for the pretty little toy, with its blue stones — so associated in my remembrance with Dora's hand, that yesterday, when I saw such another, by chance, on the finger of my own daughter, there was a momentary stirring in my heart, like pain!

When I walked about, exalted with my secret, and full of my own interest, and felt the dignity

of loving Dora, and of being beloved, so much, that if I had walked the air I could not have been more above the people not so situated, who were creeping on the earth!

When we had those meetings in the garden of the square, and sat within the dingy summer-house, so happy, that I love the London sparrows to this hour, for nothing else, and see the plumage of the tropics in their smoky feathers!

When we had our first great quarrel (within a week of our betrothal), and when Dora sent me back the ring, inclosed in a despairing cocked-hat note, wherein she used the terrible expression that "our love had begun in folly and ended in madness!" which dreadful words occasioned me to tear my hair, and cry that all was over!

When, under cover of the night, I flew to Miss Mills, whom I saw by stealth in a back kitchen where there was a mangle, and implored Miss Mills to interpose between us and avert insanity. When Miss Mills undertook the office and returned with Dora, exhorting us, from the pulpit

of her own bitter youth, to mutual concession, and the avoidance of the Desert of Sahara!

When we cried, and made it up, and were so blest again, that the back kitchen, mangle and all, changed to Love's own temple, where we arranged a plan of correspondence through Miss Mills, always to comprehend at least one letter on each side every day!

What an idle time! What an unsubstantial, happy, foolish time! Of all the times of mine, that Time has in his grip, there is none that in one retrospection I can smile at half so much, and think of half so tenderly.

"DAVID COPPERFIELD."—*Dickens.*

THE PROPOSAL.

"Come," said Gabriel, freshening again; "think a minute or two. I'll wait awhile, Miss Everdene. Will you marry me? Do, Bathsheba. I love you far more than common!"

"I'll try to think," she observed, rather more timorously; "if I can think out of doors; but my mind spreads away so."

"But you can give a guess."

"Then give me time." Bathsheba looked thoughtfully into the distance, away from the direction in which Gabriel stood.

"I can make you happy," said he to the back of her head, across the bush. "You shall have a piano in a year or two — farmers' wives are get-

ting to have pianos now — and I'll practice up the flute right well to play with you in the evenings."

"Yes; I should like that."

"And have one of those little ten-pound gigs for market — and nice flowers and birds — cocks and hens, I mean, because they are useful," continued Gabriel, feeling balanced between prose and verse.

"I should like it very much."

"And a frame for cucumbers — like a gentleman and lady."

"Yes."

"And when the wedding was over, we'd have it put in the newspaper list of marriages."

"Dearly I should like that."

"And the babies in the births — every man jack of 'em! And at home by the fire, whenever you look up, there I shall be — and whenever I look up, there will be you."

"Wait, wait, and don't be improper!"

Her countenance fell, and she was silent awhile. He contemplated the red berries be-

tween them over and over again, to such an extent, that holly seemed in his after-life to be a cypher signifying a proposal of marriage. Bathsheba decisively turned to him.

"No; 'tis no use," she said, "I don't want to marry you."

"Try."

"I have tried hard all the time I've been thinking; for a marriage would be very nice in one sense. People would talk about me, and think I had won my battle, and I should feel triumphant, and all that. But a husband —"

"Well!"

"Why, he'd always be there, as you say; whenever I looked up, there he'd be."

"Of course he would — I, that is."

"Well, what I mean is that I shouldn't mind being a bride at a wedding, if I could be one without having a husband. But since a woman can't show off in that way by herself, I shan't marry — at least yet."

"Far from the Madding Crowd."—*T. Hardy.*

AMONG THE LILIES.

"I AM not vexed," said Kate, with a soft little smile among her tears, which somehow diffused itself into the darkness, one could not tell how. He felt it warm him and brighten him, though he could not see it; and thus they made one silent round, pausing for a moment where the lilies stood up in that tall pillar, glimmering through the night and breathing out sweetness. John, whose heart was full of all unspeakable things, came to a moment's pause before them, though he was faithful to his promise, and did not speak. Some angel seemed to be by, saying *Ave*, as in that scene which the old painters always adorn with the stately flower of Mary.

John believed all the poets had said of women at that moment, in the sweetness of the summer dark. Hail, woman, full of grace! The whole air was full of angelic salutation. But it was he, the man, who had the privilege of supporting her, of protecting her, of saving her in danger. Thus the young man raved, with his heart full. And Kate in the silence, leaning on his arm, dried her tears, and trembled with a strange mixture of courage and perplexity and emotion. And then she wondered what Mrs. Mitford would say.

Mrs. Mitford said nothing when the two came in by the open window, with eyes dazzled by the sudden entrance into the light. Kate's eyes were more dazzling than the lamp, if anybody had looked at them. The tears were dry, but they had left a hurried radiance behind, and the fresh night air had ruffled the gold in her hair, and heightened the color on her cheeks, which betrayed the commotion within. Mrs. Mitford made no special remark, except that she feared the tea was cold, and that she had just been

about to ring to have it taken away. "You must have tired her, wandering so long about the garden. You should not be thoughtless, John," said his mother; "and it is almost time for prayers."

"It was my fault," said Kate; "it was so pleasant out of doors, and quiet, and sweet. I am sorry we have kept you waiting. I did not know it was so late."

"Oh, my dear, I do not mind," said Mrs. Mitford, smothering a half sigh; for, to be sure, she had been alone while they were wandering among the lilies; and she was not used to it — yet. "But Dr. Mitford is very particular about the hour for prayers, and you must haste, like a good child, with your tea, I never like to put him out."

"Oh, not for the world!" cried Kate; and she swallowed the cold tea very hurriedly, and went for Dr. Mitford's books, and arranged them on the table with her own hands; and then she came softly behind John's mother and gave her a kiss, as light as if a rose-leaf had blown against her cheek. She did not offer any explanation

of this sudden caress, but seated herself by Mrs. Mitford, and clasped her hands in her lap like a young lady in a picture of family devotion; and then Dr. Mitford's boots were heard to creak along the long passage which led from his study, and the bell was rung for prayers.

"JOHN: A LOVE STORY."—*Mrs. Oliphant.*

WALTER AND ANNIE "INTERPRETING CHESTNUT BURRS."

"If I wished to tell you how I would dwell in your thoughts, what poet has written anything equal to this half-open burr? It portrays our past, it gives our present relations, and suggests the future; only, like all parables, it must not be pressed too far or too much prominence given to some mere detail. These prickly outward-pointing spines represent the reserve and formality which keeps comparative strangers apart. But now the burr is half open, revealing its heart of silk and down. So if one could get past the barriers which you, alike with all, turn toward an

indifferent or unfriendly world, a kindliness would be found that would surround a cherished friend as these silken sides envelop this sole and favored chestnut. Again, note that the burr is half-open now, indicating, I hope, the progress we have made toward such friendship. I have no true friend in the wide world that I can trust, and I would like to believe that your regard, like this burr, is opening towards me. The final suggestion that I would draw may seem selfish, and yet is it not natural? This chestnut dwells alone in the very centre of the burr. We do not like to share a supreme friendship. There are some in whose esteem we would be first." . . . . .

Annie soon came toward him, saying:

"Perhaps this burr will suggest better meanings. You see it is wide open. That means perfect frankness. There are three chestnuts here instead of one. We must be willing to share the regard of others. One of these nuts has the central place. As we come to know people well, we usually find some one occupying

the supreme place in their esteem, and though we may approach closely, we should not wish to usurp what belongs to another. Under Jeff's vigorous blows the burr and its contents have had a tremendous downfall, but they have not parted company. True friends should stick together in adversity. What do you think of my interpretation?"

"OPENING OF A CHESTNUT BURR."—*Rev. E. P. Roe.*

LOTTY'S OBJECTION.

"Why do you wish to marry?" murmured Lotty, turning her wet face from Margaret's kisses.

"Because, because —" began Margaret.

"Was not I your husband?" interruped Lotty, impetuously; "and have not I always been your little fond, foolish husband, ever since I came to school?"

"Yes, my Lotty, and so you shall always be my little school-husband."

"Then why do you want another? I have always been a very kind, good husband; mended all your pens, done all your sums, run all your messages, and would have told fibs for you."

"That last was quite unnecessary, you know, little Lotty."

"Don't joke with me, I cannot bear it. But who is he? I don't mind you marrying one person that I know of, and if it is him I won't fret any more, for it is very fatiguing."

"MARGARET AND HER BRIDESMAIDS." *By Author of* "QUEEN OF THE COUNTY."

A WIFE'S PHILOSOPHY.

"We've brought some books that Jane left for you," said Joanna. "She would have come up, but she hadn't time. And it's been so very hot."

"I know it has. This is the first comfortable breezy day for most a fortnight. And I'm thoroughly obliged. It's a great thing to get a book up here. Specially, when the winter nights come on."

"There's something among them — a book of traveler's stories — that we thought Jaazaniah might like."

"Maybe he will. But he never took no great to readin'; more'n a chapter in the Bible of a Sunday, or the newspapers once a week, or the Almanac. Sometimes I wish't he would. It seems like goin' off and leaving him all alone,

when he sits here, and I get into a book. I'm clear lost for a while, that's a fact. But then he's always glad to see me back again, and that's one good of goin' away, however you do it."

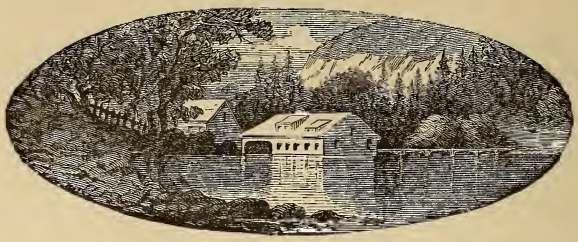
"Don't you ever read aloud to him?"

"Well, I used to try that, now and then. But it didn't do much good. I had to keep nudgin' him up all the time, or he'd be sure and go to sleep. He ain't one of the sort that can stand bein' read to. We ain't much alike in some things, and I suppose it isn't best to be. He's just as clever as the day is long; and you know that as well as I do."

Wealthy finished her sentence with a certain sudden, short defiance, as if she thrust down, with averted mental vision, some buried-alive thought that lifted itself now and then.

"If he got lost, as I do, there'd be no knowing when we should ever come across one another again. But he's a kind of anchor for me. He's always right there, and I know just where to find him."

"The Gayworthys."—*Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.*



THE PET CANARY.

THERE was one canary which they christened tened Golden Cloud. It was one of the two canaries that Dan had first trained; and for this and other reasons Golden Cloud was a special favorite with the lads. Dan used to declare that Golden Cloud literally understood every word he spoke to it. And it really appeared as if Dan were right in so declaring and so believing; it was certainly a fact that Golden Cloud was a bird of superior intelligence. The other birds were of that opinion, or they would not have accepted its leadership. When they marched, Golden Cloud was at the head of them — and very proud it appeared to be of its position; when the per-

formances took place, Golden Cloud was the first to commence; if anything *very* responsible and *very* particular were to be done, Golden Cloud was intrusted with it; and if any new bird was refractory, it devolved upon Golden Cloud to assist Dan to bring that bird to its senses. The birds did not entertain a particle of envy towards Golden Cloud because it had attained an eminence more distinguished than their own; and this fact was as apparent, as it must have been astonishing, to any reflective human being who enjoyed the happy privilege of being present now and then at the performances of Dan's clever troupe. Even when old age crept upon it — it was in the prime of life when Dan first took it in hand — the same respect was paid to the sagamore of the company. Its sight grew filmed, its legs grew scaly, its feathers grew ragged. What matter? Had it not been kind and gentle to them when in its prime? Should they not be kind and gentle to it now that Time was striking

it down? And was it not, even in its decrepitude, the wise bird of them all?

Notwithstanding that it grew more and more shaky every hour almost, the old sense of duty was strong in the heart of Golden Cloud, and it strove to take part in the performances to the last. Golden Cloud had evidently learned the lesson that to try always to do one's duty is the sweetest thing in life. In that respect it was wiser than many human beings, who should have been wiser than it. It was a melancholy sight, yet a comical one withal, to see Golden Cloud lift a sword with its beak, and try to hold it there and hop with it at the head of the company. It staggered here and there, and, being almost blind, sometimes hit an inoffensive bird across the beak, which caused a momentary confusion; but everything was set right as quickly as could be. The other birds bore with Golden Cloud's infirmities, and made its labors light for it. Even the tomtit — that saucy beautiful rascal, with its crown of Cambridge blue, who had been the

most refractory bird that Golden Cloud ever had to deal with, who *would* turn heels over head in the midst of a serious lesson, and who *would* hop and twist about and agitate its staid companions with its restless tricks — even the tomtit, whose greatest delight was to steal things and break things, but whose spirit had been subdued and tamed by Golden Cloud's firmness, assisted the veteran in its old age, and did not make game of it.

One evening Joshua came round to Dan's room rather later than usual, and found Dan in tears.

"What is the matter, Dan?" asked Joshua.

Dan did not reply.

"Do your legs hurt you, Dan?" asked Joshua, tenderly.

Dan formed a "No" with his lips, but uttered no sound.

Joshua thought it best not to tease his friend with any more questions. He saw that Dan was suffering from a grief which he would presently

unbosom. He took his accordion on his knee, and began to play very softly. As he played, a canary in a mourning-cloak came out of the toy-house; another canary in a mourning-cloak followed, then a bullfinch, and another bullfinch; then the tomtit and the linnets; and then the blackbirds; all in little black cloaks, which Ellen Taylor's nimble fingers had made for them that day out of a piece of the lining of an old frock. At the sight of the first canary, with its black cloak on, Joshua was filled with astonishment; but when bird after bird followed, and ranged themselves solemnly in a line before him, and when he missed the presence of one familiar friend, he solved the riddle of their strange appearance; the birds were in mourning for the death of Golden Cloud.

They seemed to know it, too; they seemed to know that they had lost a friend, and that they were about to pay the last tribute of respect to their once guide and master. The bullfinches, their crimson breasts hidden by their cloaks,

looked with their black masks of faces like negro birds in mourning; the amiable linnets, unobtrusive and shy as they generally were, were still more quiet and sad than usual; even the daring blackbirds were subdued — with the exception of one, who, in the midst of a silent interval, struck up "Polly, put the kettle on," in its shrill whistle, but, observing the eyes of the tomtit fixed upon it with an air of reproach, stopped in sudden remorse with the "kettle" sticking in its throat.

Dan had made a white shroud for Golden Cloud; and it was both quaint and mournful to see it as it lay in its coffin — Dan's money-box — surrounded by the mourners in their black cloaks. They stood quite still, with their cunning little heads all inclined one way, as if they were waiting for news concerning their dead leader from the world beyond the present.

Joshua, with a glance of sorrow at the coffin, said:

"Your money-box, Dan!"

"I wish I could have buried it in a flower-pot, Jo," replied Dan, suppressing a sob.

"Why didn't you?"

"Mother said father would be angry —"

Here the blackbird — perceiving that the tomtit was no longer observing it, and inwardly fretting that it should have been pulled up short in the midst of its favorite song; also feeling awkward, doubtless, with a kettle in its throat — piped out with amazing rapidity and shrillness, "Polly put the kettle on; we all have tea."

The blue feathers in the tomtit's tail quivered with indignation, and its white-tipped wings fluttered reprovingly. Moral force was evidently quite thrown away upon such a blackbird as that; so the tomtit bestowed upon the recreant a sharp dig with its iron beak, and the blackbird bore the punishment with meekness; merely giving vent, in response, to a wonderful imitation of the crowing of an extremely weak cock, who led a discontented life in a neighboring back yard. After which it relapsed into silence.

Dan, who had stopped his speech to observe this passage between the birds, repeated:

"Mother said father would be angry; he knows how many flower-pots we have. So I used my money-box."

"But you would rather have a flower-pot, Dan?"

"I should have liked a flower-pot above all things; it seems more natural for a bird. Something might grow out of it; something that Golden Cloud would like to know is above it, if it was only a blade of grass."

Joshua ran out of Dan's room, and returned in a very few minutes with a flower-pot with mignonette growing in it. He was almost breathless with excitement.

"It is mine, Dan," he said, "and it is yours. I bought it with my own money; and it shall be Golden Cloud's coffin."

"Kiss me, Jo," said Dan.

Joshua kissed him, and then carefully lifted the flower-roots from the pot, and placed Golden

Cloud in the soft mould beneath. A few tears fell from Dan's eyes into the flower-pot coffin, as he looked for the last time upon the form of his pet canary. Then Joshua replaced the flower-roots, and arranged the earth, and Golden Cloud was ready for burial.

"Play something, Jo," said Dan.

Joshua took his accordion in his hands, and played a slow solemn march; and the birds, directed by Dan, hopped gravely round the flower-pot, the tomtit keeping its eye sternly fixed upon the rebellious blackbird, expressing in the look an unmistakable determination to put an instant stop to the slightest exhibition of indecency.

"I don't know where to bury it," said Dan, when the ceremony was completed. "Ellen has been trying to pick out a flag-stone in the yard, but she made her fingers bleed, and then couldn't move it. And if it *was* buried there, the stone would have to be trodden down, and the flowers in the coffin couldn't grow."

"There's that little bit of garden in *our* yard," said Joshua. "I can bury it there, if you don't mind. I can put the flower-pot in so that the mignonette will grow out of it quite nicely. It isn't very far, Dan," continued Joshua, divining Dan's wish that Golden Cloud should be buried near him; "only five yards off, and its the best place we know of."

Dan assenting, Joshua took the flower-pot, and buried it in what he called his garden; which was an estate of such magnificent proportions that he could have covered it with his jacket. He was proud of it notwithstanding, and considered it a grand property. A boundary of oyster-shells defined the limits of the estate, and served as a warning to trespassing feet. In the centre of this garden Golden Cloud was buried. When Joshua returned to Dan's room, the mourning-cloaks were taken off the birds — who seemed very glad to get rid of them — and they were sent to bed.

"JOSHUA MARVEL."—*B. L. Farjeon.*

MARGARET'S RIDE.

QUICK — quick — how slow she was! should she never be ready? Quick! Sir Rohan, neighing again from his stall, seemed to reproach her for her dilatoriness — to remind her that every second counted for more than whole years might do at any other crisis of her life. She was dressed — she was hurrying down stairs — turning towards the outer door, before she recollected that the stable was locked. The key was always deposited by Jupe in a special nook in the dining-room closet, along with the keys of all the domestic offices, according to Mrs. Dane's edict. She never failed some time in the night to descend from her chamber, in order to satisfy herself

they were there, if she had forgotten to look for them before retiring; and as Jupe had more than once been roused, imbecile and howling, from his dreams, to hunt up such keys as fell to his charge, even he, the most heedless of all the heedless mulatto race, had learned wisdom and caution in the one particular.

Margaret found the treasure. She seemed to move now as if she had wings, but the confusion and bewilderment were gone, and in the midst of her haste she forgot nothing. She noiselessly bolted the doors of the principal entrance, slipped out at the side passage, locking it behind her and putting the key in her pocket, as she ran with the swiftness of a wild animal towards the stable, from whence sounded Sir Rohan's voice anew, but this time eager and rejoicing, as if he heard her tread, and, comprehending the errand on which she was bent, sought to animate her courage by his sympathy.

The door swung open easily, and Margaret entered the stable, Sir Rohan turning his head at

the sound, but standing motionless as if to show her that she need have no fear.

The harness-room beyond had gratings instead of shutters to the windows, and she could see a saddle and bridle hanging within reach. She felt no lack of strength — she might have been lifting her daintiest work-basket, for any difficulty she found. She was back by Sir Rohan's side: the moonbeams shone full into the place, and revealed his great eyes fastened upon her, while he evinced his recognition of her voice and his content thereat by another short neigh.

As she had formerly been in the habit of riding much alone, her father had wisely made her learn to adjust every portion of the saddle accoutrements, that she might know how to remedy any undoing of carelessly buckled straps when she chanced to be out of the reach of masculine assistance, and the lesson did her good service now.

She was ready. There was no leisure to think that Sir Rohan might rebel at the last moment;

if there had been, the belief, strong in her mind, as it is my own, that the beautiful creature had some dim perception of the need there was of his earnest co-operation in her work, would have prevented her feeling the slightest fear. She led him forth into the yard to the great block — he stood motionless as a horse cut out of black marble — untroubled by the obnoxious draperies which caused him to hate female equestrians, and still answering her repetition of his name with unabated good humor. Another instant and she was in the saddle, and with one signal to Sir Rohan, that was like a supplication in its thrilling force, the horse bounded away at a keen run.

Away — away down the hill — the corner into the mountain road turned — away, away, as if the good steed fully understood his part in the midnight errand, and meant to do his duty well. Away through the moonlight — every sign of human habitation left behind, and the foremost trees of the nearing wood beckoning her on with

their leafy hands. Away up the narrow bridle-path which in the first arches of the forest led off from the main road, so vine-hidden and secret that few even of the villagers knew where it diverged; on, on — up, up — with the track growing steeper — the moonbeams quivering down through the interlacing boughs, which stirred with a low murmur in the breeze like spirit-voices of encouragement and consolation.

On dashed the good horse, never erring in the blind path which he had frequently travelled during the past weeks, never faltering or stumbling — on, on — while the leaf-tones whispered louder, and the brook along which the course now led repeated their song of encouragement, and bade her hasten — hasten to her journey's end. Onward — upward — no stop — no stay! Margaret's long hair, loosened by some obstructing branch, streamed over her shoulders like a dusky veil; her features were set and fixed; her eyes gleamed with a radiance that tried vainly to pierce the goal she sought; her hands grasped

the bridle firm and true, as if they had been the mailed hands of a maiden Knight, riding forth on his first brave errand in behalf of innocence and the Holy Grail.

"On, Sir Rohan, on! It is for his life — for his life — on, on!" Margaret heard herself crying, as if in answer to the voices that called her in the wind and the waters. "We will save him — on, on!"

And the wind and the brook seemed to repeat, "You will save him — on, on!" And Sir Rohan, excited still more by her eager voice, plunged forward with such speed that trees and rocks fled wildly back in the moonlight, but carried her so easily and well that not the slightest physical discomfort troubled her mental exaltation. Steeper and steeper the path grew, as they penetrated farther into the wood; but there was blood in Sir Rohan's veins that had coursed across the great deserts under burning Arabian suns, and he knew neither impatience nor fatigue. More sombre and gloomy waxed the road under the

boughs of the giant pines, louder chanted the brook, but now with a certain warning in its voice, and in the distance on either side great silvery white birch trunks showed like phantom forms that had come to urge her forward.

"On, Sir Rohan, on! For his life — for his life! If we should be too late — on, on!" moaned Margaret afresh, and the pine-trees and the leaping brook moaned back, "For his life! If you should be too late — on, on!"

They were coming out from amidst the density of the wood; the path widened; the rocks towered into a wall right and left; afar on the top Margaret could see the stately pines, that seemed dashing along to keep her company in that mad chase; and still above, the moon and stars, which hurried in advance to guard her way. They were in the Gorge — they were nearing the goal. Through the stillness Margaret heard the slow dull sob of the engine, like the ceaseless complaining of an imprisoned monster, caught and chained by human force to perform its pur-

gatorial task of pumping water from the newly opened shaft — sob, sob, in a measured tone; and as Sir Rohan with every stride bore her nearer and nearer, the sound appeared to gain an exulting strength, as if the iron Caliban understood the danger that menaced its human tyrant, and was panting for the echo of his death-cry to usher in its freedom.

"Hurry, Rohan — hurry — a little farther — only a little! For his life — for his life!" shrieked Margaret.

But now the voice of the iron monster drowned the answer of the torrent, and clouds of smoke from the tall chimneys spread their mist over the upper sky. Margaret's breath was gone in that last frenzied wail; there was a horrible constriction in her throat; a wild flutter at her heart — fiery specks danced before her eyes; the sobs of the iron Caliban grew into howls of defiance, and her reeling brain comprehended only that she was riding a fearful race against death, and that

the grim tyrant was straining all his remorseless strength to win.

Out into the charred and blackened open where trees and shrubs and grass had been rooted up and withered by an unmerciful fire, to leave the plain clear for human labors. There was the brick prison in which the iron demon was confined; back of it, the new wooden building where slept the man whose life she had come to save. For the first time she looked about; no sign of any human being near; she was long in advance of the approaching murderers. The sickening horror passed; her senses could act again; every nerve was strung to its extremest tension, till there was no consciousness of physical exhaustion.

"Miss Van Kortland."—*Frank Lee Benedict.*

THE CHILDREN IN THE BURNING TOWER.

THE little ones opened their eyes at last.

The conflagration had not yet entered the library, but it cast a rosy glow across the ceiling. The children had never seen an aurora like that; they watched it. Georgette was in ecstasies. The conflagration unfurled all its splendors; the black hydra and the scarlet dragon appeared amidst the wreathing smoke in awful darkness and gorgeous vermilion. Long streaks of flame shot far out and illuminated the shadows, like opposing comets pursuing one another. Fire is recklessly prodigal with its treasures; its furnaces are filled with gems which it flings to the

winds; it is not for nothing that charcoal is identical with the diamond.

Fissures had opened in the wall of the upper story through which the embers poured like cascades of jewels; the heaps of straw and rats burning in the granary began to stream out of the windows in an avalanche of golden rain, the rats turning to amethysts and the straw to carbuncles.

"Pretty!" said Georgette.

They all three raised themselves.

"Ah!" cried the mother. "They have wakened!" René Jean got up, then Gros Alain, and Georgette followed.

René Jean stretched his arms toward the window and said, "I am warm."

"Me warm," cooed Georgette.

The mother shrieked: "My children! René! Alain! Georgette!"

The little ones looked about. They strove to comprehend. When men are frightened, children are only curious. He who is easily aston-

ished is difficult to alarm; ignorance is intrepidity. Children have so little claim to purgatory that if they saw it they would admire.

The mother repeated, "René! Alain! Georgette!" René Jean turned his head; that voice roused him from his reverie. Children have short memories, but their recollections are swift; the whole past is yesterday to them. René Jean saw his mother, found that perfectly natural, and feeling a vague want of support in the midst of those strange surroundings, he called, "Mamma!"

"Mamma!" said Gros Alain.

"M'ma!" said Georgette.

And she held out her little arms.

"My children!" shrieked the mother.

All three went close to the window-ledge; fortunately the fire was not on that side.

"I am too warm," said René Jean. He added, "It burns." Then his eyes sought the mother. "Come here, mother!" he cried.

"Tum, m'ma," repeated Georgette.

The mother, with her hair streaming about her face, her garments torn, her feet and hands bleeding, let herself roll from bush to bush down into the ravine. Cimourdain and Guéchamp were there, as powerless as Gauvain was above. The soldiers, desperate at being able to do nothing, swarmed about. The heat was insupportable, but nobody felt it. They looked at the bridge — the height of the arches — the different stories of the castle — the inaccessible windows. Help to be of any avail must come at once. Three stories to climb. No way of doing it.

. . . . . .

The hollow sound of cracking timbers rose above the roar of the flames. The panes of glass in the bookcases of the library cracked and fell with a crash. It was evident that the timber-work had given way. Human strength could do nothing. Another moment and the whole would fall. The soldiers only waited for the final catastrophe. They could hear the little voices repeat, "Mamma! mamma!"

The whole crowd was paralyzed with horror. Suddenly, at the casement near that where the children stood, a tall form appeared against the crimson background of the flames.

Every head was raised — every eye fixed. A man was above there — a man in the library — in the furnace. The face showed black against the flames, but they could see the white hair — they recognized the Marquis de Lantenac. He disappeared, then appeared again.

The indomitable old man stood in the window shoving out an enormous ladder. It was the escape-ladder deposited in the library — he had seen it lying upon the floor and dragged it to the window. He held it by one end — with the marvelous agility of an athlete he slipped it out of the casement and slid it along the wall down into the ravine.

Radoub folded his arms about the ladder as it descended within his reach, crying, "Live the Republic!"

The Marquis shouted, "Live the King."

Radoub muttered, "You may cry what you like, and talk nonsense if you please, you are an angel of mercy all the same."

The ladder was settled in place, and communication established between the burning floor and the ground. Twenty men rushed up, Radoub at their head, and in the twinkling of an eye they were hanging to the rungs from the top to the bottom, making a human ladder. Radoub, on the topmost rung, touched the window. He had his face turned toward the conflagration. The little army scattered among the heath and along the sides of the ravine pressed forward, overcome by contending emotions, upon the plateau, into the ravine, out on the platform of the tower.

The Marquis disappeared again, then reappeared bearing a child in his arms. There was a tremendous clapping of hands.

The Marquis had seized the first little one that he found within reach. It was Gros Alain.

Gros Alain cried, "I am afraid."

The Marquis gave the boy to Radoub; Ra-

doub passed him on to the soldier behind, who passed him to another, and just as Gros Alain, greatly frightened and sobbing loudly, was given from hand to hand to the bottom of the ladder, the Marquis who had been absent for a moment returned to the window with René Jean, who struggled and wept and beat Radonb with his little fists as the Marquis passed him on to the sergeant.

The Marquis went back into the chamber that was now filled with flames. Georgette was there alone. He went up to her. She smiled. This man of granite felt his eyelids grow moist. He asked, "What is your name?"

"Orgette," said she.

He took her in his arms; she was still smiling, and at the instant he handed her to Radoub, that conscience so lofty, and yet so darkened, was dazzled by the beauty of innocence; the old man kissed the child.

"It is the little girl!" said the soldiers; and Georgette in her turn descended from arm to

arm, till she reached the ground, amidst cries of exultation. They clapped their hands; they leaped; the old grenadiers sobbed, and she smiled at them.

The mother stood at the foot of the ladder breathless, mad, intoxicated by this change — flung, without transition, from hell into paradise. Excess of joy lacerates the heart in its own way. She extended her arms; she received first Gros Alain, then René Jean, then Georgette. She covered them with frantic kisses, then burst into a wild laugh and fainted.

A great cry rose: "They are all saved!"

"NINETY-THREE."—*Victor Hugo.*

A STREET SCENE.

It was four in the afternoon by the market clock, when, the business of the day having been concluded, Ambray and Michael drove to the spot where they had arranged to meet and take up Ma'r S'one.

They found him waiting there. Ambray had fetched his coat, and was crossing towards the wagon, and Ma'r S'one was doing something to the harness at Michael's direction, when all three were caused to turn their faces up the street by a sudden cry.

It was not a cry of acute pain, fear, anger, or entreaty; it was not a cry wrung out by any sharp and sudden aggravation; it was rather such a cry as might come from a creature who,

in the loneliness and darkness of night, when no earthly ear can hear, and when God seems further than the stars, sets free some misery that has lain gagged all day, and lets it wail aloud.

It was a girl's voice, and its youth made its anguish the more penetrating and strange.

It did not soon cease, but went on minute after minute till every one in the street stood still and turned and listened, while several hurried towards the spot from which the sound came.

Thus a little crowd soon shut from Ambray, Michael, and Ma'r S'one the object which they had seen when they first turned their faces and looked.

This was the figure of a girl standing at the edge of the kerb-stone with her hands stretched a little forward, the palms outwards, as if she were feeling for the wall on the wrong side of the pavement.

By the time Michael had consigned the reins to Ma'r S'one, and pushed his way with his master through the little crowd, the girl was sitting

on the kerb-stone where she stood a minute before, and the cry that still came from her lips seemed duller and more monotonous.

She appeared to be about sixteen years old, and at a first glance Michael thought her but a common-place, slatternly, ragged creature, differing little from thousands of others he had seen selling fruit and flowers in the London streets.

She was very slight, her ragged clothes hung on her as on a reed; but her face, though it was small, was not thin or pinched with want. The cheeks and lips were at this moment colorless, but it seemed as if color had only recently left them.

The head from which the bonnet and hair-net had fallen was thrown back, the eyes were closed, the face was uplifted with an expression of intolerable misery.

The girl's clothes were dark and travel-stained, and her hair, of a pale and rare flaxen shade, looked strangely out of place upon her drawn-up brows and over her shoulders, which were pushed

up by her hands being rested at either side of her on the low kerb-stone where she sat.

These hands were red and black, as were also the little bare feet resting in the road. The outline of the up-turned chin was singularly perfect. It seemed, indeed, touched — as the sunshine fell on it — with a most tender spiritual beauty, which made one imagine that some unseen, angelic hand supported it; and kept this creature, so young and so helpless, from sinking utterly in those depths of anguish from which the voice — flowing drearily through the parted lips — appeared to come.

"What's this about? What's the matter with the girl?" asked Ambray of a commercial traveler who stood near him.

"Oh, she pretends she's just been struck blind."

"Pretends?" echoed Michael, indignant, though whether with the speaker or the girl he hardly knew.

"Strurk blind," Ambray repeated; "what, just now?"

"Hush," said the commercial traveller. "Let us watch, — I fancy there'll be some fun presently: that policeman has his eye on her. I fancy, from what he said, he knows her, and has seen this game before."

"Ah, the young baggage; is that it?" murmured Ambray, beginning to feel resentment at having been duped into a feeling of pity but for one instant; and, with a stern satire in his eye, he sat himself to watch with the rest of the crowd — to watch and judge this most wicked impostor or most bitter sufferer, whichever she might prove to be.

She had arraigned herself, or fate had arraigned her, before a set of judges which, perhaps, represented the world about as faithfully as an ordinary court of justice does.

The larger part of the crowd had collected since Ambray and Michael had arrived at the spot; but those standing closely round the girl

were simply the passengers through the street who had been all simultaneously stopped in their different pursuits and thoughts, and compelled, by this sad voice, to turn and fix their minds, one and all, on the same subject.

The number of these was about fifteen, and consisted of the commercial traveler, standing by Ambray; three friends, two of whom were poor-law guardians, and one an impressionable old gentleman, who boasted of never being deceived in his first impressions; the watchful policeman; a little tailor, going home disappointed of some money he had expected; a party of young ladies and gentlemen just returned from a yachting excursion; an old farmer and his wife; a clergyman; a tramp of doubtful character; and a little child about three years of age, standing with its finger in its mouth, and the exact same expression of rueful pity in its face as Ma'r S'one had on his as he turned round while standing holding back the powerful cart-horses, meek as lambs against his feeble arm.

The commercial traveler did not put any question to the girl, as most of the others did in turn, but stood prepared, as he had said, to enjoy the fun of seeing an imposture detected, an impostor hunted down. He was a hard-working, honest man, who lost something considerable yearly in actual pounds, shillings, and pence, through not departing a little from his own ideas of honesty. This loss was never absent from his mind, and the only compensation he found — for the world offered him no other — was dwelling on the sufferings of those who had not, like himself, chosen the straight path. His virtue was as a wolf within him, demanding for its food the tears of detected vice. He was one of those men whom if placed among the sheep on Christ's right hand would find less reward in hearing the words, "Come, ye blessed," than in listening to the "Depart, ye cursed," uttered to the goats on the left hand.

Next to this man stood Ambray, who hated law for the simple reason that it had always gone

hand in hand with Mrs. Grist against him. This caused him, though his own judgment was hard against the girl, to regard the delighted excitement of his commercial neighbor with much disgust; and he could not help comparing him in his mind to a great blue-bottle fly buzzing with delight as he watched some feeble and pretty creature of his own species entangling itself in a spider's web.

The three friends stood nearest the vagrant — and of these it was the impressionable-looking gentleman who spoke to her most often, and who always appeared more and more convinced of her sincerity and innocence each time he spoke to her, whether she answered him or only continued her bitter crying.

His friends, the poor-law guardians, did not seem greatly impressed by his opinion. One — the perfection of whose health and toilet showed who and what had been his chief care through life — had clearly written on his handsome face an intimation to providence, that after such a

winter as the parish had undergone, he should certainly expect this to prove a case for the prison authorities, and not for the poor-law board.

The person who leant upon his arm was also a rich man, but one who had grown cadaverous and hollow-eyed, and had sickened of his sumptuous fare, his purple and fine linen, in considering the sores and cries of those who came to ask for the crumbs that fell from his table. He was a charitable man whose charity had been much imposed upon; and as he stood looking at the girl none in the crowd doubted her more, and none were so anxious to believe in her and to give her assistance and comfort.

The policeman stood just behind the commercial traveler, whom he had taken into his confidence. With his hand on his hip, he listened with a smile of supreme contempt to all the questions, sharp or gentle, that were put to the miserable girl, and to the answers that she gave.

The disappointed little tailor, with the black

cloth — in which he had just taken home the work for which he had not been paid — twisted round his arm, stood a little aloof from the others, lost in thought. He was too humble-minded a man not to have accepted instantly the verdict of his betters; and one glance at the poor-law guardians, the policeman, and commercial traveler, had convinced him as to the depravity of the creature whose cries had stopped his feet on their sad journey homewards. But though he accepted the verdict undoubtingly, there was a furtive, frightened, but an almost fierce anxiety in his eye as to the judgment that was going to be passed on the offender. He had never seen her before, yet he was possessed by a feeling of which he was greatly ashamed, but which none the less held him to the spot — a feeling that there was no one in the world so well able as himself to offer evidence as to how easy might have been the slipping of these young feet, how terribly hard it is to resist the shine on

want's steps when the head is giddy with hunger and the heart sick.

The yachting party had evidently enjoyed a gay little cruise, and were rather glad to hear and believe that the girl was an impostor, and that consequently there was no need for them to put aside their gaiety and look on the matter in a serious light.

The old farmer and his wife took the whole affair as one of the amusements of the town — a visit to which was an utter failure, unless it afforded some such sight. They only removed their spectacles from time to time to wipe them and put them on again, and begin the study of the town impostor with renewed zest.

The tramp of doubtful character apparently had many if not good reasons for keeping behind the policeman as much as possible. He looked very haggard and weary, and carried his boots over his shoulder on a stick that had as vagabond-like an expression as his face. His eyes remained fixed on the young girl, wistfully alert to

meet *her* eye, and signal to her with as much force as could be thrown into a wink that, stranger as he was, he considered her game was up, and that the sooner she made off the better it would be for her.

The clergyman appeared also to have come to the conclusion that the girl was acting, but he seemed to be watching the little crowd about her with almost more interest than he looked at her. Perhaps this was because he knew most of these persons pretty well, and was wondering with melancholy interest which among them was fitted to cast the first stone. He had not the pleasure of the commercial traveler's acquaintance, or doubtless he would have wondered no longer; for, though that gentleman was really too good-hearted to do personal violence to any one if he could help it, yet, as far as *right* went, he would assuredly maintain that he could take up the largest stone at hand and smite with clear conscience and unerring aim straight through the hypocrite's young bosom to her heart.

The little child and Ma'r S'one were the only ones who regarded her simply as being in trouble — who, without inquiring as to the why or the wherefore, turned to each other with faces that said only, with rueful sympathy — "Here are tears!"

"THE HIGH MILLS."—*Katherine Saunders.*

"COCKLES AND CRAMBO," OR HAZEL RIPWINKLEY'S PARTY.

HAZEL RIPWINKLEY put on her nankeen sack and skirt, and her little, round, brown straw hat. For May had come, and almost gone, and it was a day of early summer warmth.

Hazel's dress was not a "suit"; it had been made and worn two summers before suits were thought of; yet it suited very well, as people's things are apt to do, after all, who do not trouble themselves about minutiæ of fashion, and so get no particular antediluvian marks upon them that show when the flood subsides.

Her mother knew some things that Hazel did not. Mrs. Ripwinkley, if she had been asleep for five and twenty years, had lost none of her perceptive faculties in the trance. But she did not hamper her child with any doubts; she let her go on her simple way, under the shield of her simplicity, to test this world she had come into, for herself.

Hazel had written down her little list of the girls' names that she would like to ask; and Mrs. Ripwinkley looked at it with a smile. There was Ada Geoffrey, the banker's daughter, and Lilian Ashburne, the professor's,—heiresses each of double lines of birth and wealth. She could remember how, in her childhood, the old names sounded, with the respect that was in men's tones when they were spoken; and underneath were Lois James and Katie Kilburnie, children of a printer and a hatter. They had all been chosen for their purely personal qualities. A child, let alone, chooses as an angel chooses.

It remained to be seen how they would come together.

At the very head, in large, fair letters, was,—

"Miss Craydocke."

Down at the bottom, she had just added,—

"Mr. Kincaid and Dorris."

"For, if I have *some* grown folks, mother, perhaps I ought to have *other* grown folks,—to keep the balance true. Besides, Mr. Kincaid and Dorris always like the *little* nice times."

From the day when Dorris Kincaid had come over with the gray glass vase and her repeated thanks, when the flowers had done their ministry and faded, there had been little simple courtesies, each way, between the opposite houses; and once Kenneth and his sister had taken tea with the Ripwinkley's, and they had played "Crambo" and "Consequences" in the evening. The real little game of "Consequences," of which this present friendliness was a link, was going on all the time, though they did not stop to read the lines as they folded them down, and "what the

world said" was not one of the items in their scheme of it all.

It would have been something worth while to have followed Hazel as she went her rounds, asking quietly at each house to see Mrs. This or That, "as she had a message;" and being shown, like a little representative of an almost extinct period, up into the parlor, or the dressing-room of each lady, and giving her quaint errand.

"I am Hazel Ripwinkley," she would say, "and my mother sends her compliments, and would like to have Lilian,"—or whoever else,—"come at four o'clock to-day, and spend the afternoon and take tea. I'm to have a little party such as she used to have, and nobody is to be much dressed up, and we are only to play games."

"Why, that is charming!" cried Mrs. Ashburne; for the feeling of her own sweet early days, and the old B—— Square house, came over her as she heard the words. "It is Lilian's music afternoon; but never mind; give my kind com-

pliments to your mother, and she will be very happy to come."

And Mrs. Ashburne stooped down and kissed Hazel, when she went away.

She stood in the deep carved stone entrance-way to Mrs. Geoffrey's house, in the same fearless, Red Riding Hood fashion, just as she would have waited in any little country porch up in Homesworth, where she had need indeed to knock.

Not a whit dismayed was she either, when the tall man-servant opened to her, and admitted her into the square, high, marble-paved hall, out of which great doors were set wide into rooms rich and quiet with noble adorning and soft shading, — where pictures made such a magic upon the walls, and books were piled from floor to ceiling; and where her little figure was lost as she went in, and she hesitated to take a seat anywhere, lest she should be quite hidden in some great arm-chair or sofa corner, and Mrs. Geoffrey should not see her when she came down.

So, as the lady entered, there she was, upright and waiting, on her two feet, in her nankeen dress, just within the library doors, with her face turned toward the staircase.

"I am Hazel Ripwinkley," she began; as if she had said, I am Pease-blossom or Mustard-seed; "I go to school with Ada." And went on, then, with her compliments and her party. And at the end she said, very simply,—

"Miss Craydocke is coming, and she knows the games."

"Miss Craydocke, of Orchard Street? And where do you live?"

"In Aspen Street, close by, in Uncle Oldway's house. We haven't lived there very long,—only this winter; before that we always lived in Homesworth."

"And Homesworth is in the country? Don't you miss that?"

"Yes; but Aspen Street isn't very bad; we've got a garden. Besides, we like streets and neighbors."

Then she added,— for her little witch-stick felt spiritually the quality of what she spoke to,— "Wouldn't Mr. Geoffrey come for Ada in the evening?"

"I haven't the least doubt he would!" said Mrs. Geoffrey, her face all alive with exquisite and kindly amusement, and catching the spirit of the thing from the inimitable simplicity before her, such as never, she did believe, had walked into anybody's house before, in this place and generation, and was no more to be snubbed than a flower or a breeze or an angel.

It was a piece of Witch Hazel's witchery, or inspiration, that she named Miss Craydocke; for Miss Craydocke was an old dear friend of Mrs. Geoffrey's, in that "heart of things" behind the fashions, where the kingdom is growing up. But of course Hazel could not have known that; something in the lady's face just made her think of the same thing in Miss Craydocke's, and so she spoke, forgetting to explain, nor wondering

in the very least, when she was met with knowledge.

It was all divining, though, from the beginning to the end. That was what took her into these homes, rather than to a score of other places up and down the self-same streets, where, if she had got in at all, she would have met strange, lofty stares, and freezing "thankyou's," and "engagements."

"I've found the real folks, mother, and they're all coming!" she cried, joyfully, running in where Mrs. Ripwinkley was setting little vases and baskets about on shelf and table, between the white, plain, muslin draperies of the long parlor windows. In vases and baskets were sweet-May flowers; bunches of deep-hued, rich-scented violets, stars of blue and white periwinkle, and Miss Craydocke's lilies of the valley in their tall, cool leaves; each kind gathered by itself in clusters and handfuls. Inside the wide, open fireplace, behind the high brass fender and the shining andirons, was a "chimney flower

pot," country fashion, of green lilac boughs, — not blossoms, — and woodbine sprays, and crimson and white tulips. The room was fair and fragrant, and the windows were wide open upon vines and grass.

"It looks like you, mother, just as Mrs. Geoffrey's house looks like her. Houses ought to look like people, I think."

"There's your surprise, children. We should not be doing it right without a surprise, you know."

And the surprise was not doll's pelerines, but books. "Little Women" was one, which sent Diana and Hazel off for a delicious two hours' read up in their own room until dinner.

After dinner, Miss Craydocke came, in her purple and white striped mohair and her white lace neckerchief; and at three o'clock Uncle Titus walked in, with his coat pockets so bulgy, and rustling and odorous of peppermint and sassafras, that it was no use to pretend to wait and

be unconscious, but a pure mercy to unload him so that he might be able to sit down.

Nobody knows to this day where he got them; he must have ordered them somewhere, one would think, long enough before to have special moulds and implements made; but there were large, beautiful cockles, — not of the old flour-paste sort, but of clear, sparkling sugar, rose-color, and amber, and white, with little slips of tinted paper tucked within, and these printed delicately with pretty rhymes and couplets, from real poets; things to be truly treasured, yet simple, for children's apprehension, and fancy, and fun. And there were "Salem gibraltars," such as we only get out of Essex County now and then, for a big Charitable Fair, when Salem and everywhere else gets its spirit up to send its best and most especial; and there were toys and devices in sugar, — flowers and animals, hats, bonnets, and boots, apples and cucumbers, — such as Diana and Hazel, and even Desire and Helena, had never seen before.

"It isn't quite fair," said good Miss Craydocke. "We were to go back to the old, simple fashions of things; and here you are beginning over again already with sumptuous inventions. It's the very way it came about before, till it was all spoilt."

"No," said Uncle Titus, stoutly. "It's only 'Old *and* New,'—the very selfsame good old notions brought to a little modern perfection. They're not French flummery, either; and there's not a drop of gin, or a flavor of prussic acid, or any other abominable chemical, in one of those contrivances. They're as innocent as they look; good honest mint and spice and checkerberry and lemon and rose. I know the man that made 'em!"

Helena Ledwith began to think that the first person, singular or plural, might have a good time; but that awful third! Helena's "they" was as potent and tremendous as her mother's.

"It's nice," she said to Hazel; "but they don't have such things. I never saw them at a party. And they don't play games; they always

dance. And it's broad, hot daylight; and — you haven't asked a single boy!"

"Why, I don't know any! Only Jimmy Scarup; and I guess he'd rather play ball, and break windows!"

"Jimmy Scarup!" And Helena turned away, hopeless of Hazel's comprehending.

But "they" came; and "they" turned right into "we."

It was not a party; it was something altogether fresh and new; the house was a new, beautiful place; it was like the country. And Aspen Street, when you got down there, was so still and shady and sweet smelling and pleasant. They experienced the delight of finding out something.

Miss Craydocke and Hazel set them at it,— their good time; they had planned it all out, and there was no stiff, shy waiting. They began, right off, with the "Muffin Man." Hazel danced up to Desire:—

"O, *do* you know the Muffin Man,
The Muffin Man, the Muffin Man?
O, *do* you know the Muffin Man
That lives in Drury Lane?"
"O, yes, I know the Muffin Man,
The Muffin Man, the Muffin Man,
O, yes, I know the Muffin Man
That lives in Drury Lane."

And so they danced off together:—

"Two of us know the Muffin Man,
The Muffin Man, the Muffin Man,
Two of us know the Muffin Man
That lives in Drury Lane."

And then they besieged Miss Craydocke; and then the three met Ada Geoffrey, just as she had come in and spoken to Diana and Mrs. Ripwinkley; and Ada had caught the refrain, and responded instantly; and *four* of them knew the Muffin Man.

"I know they'll think it's common and queer, and they'll laugh to-morrow," whispered Helena

to Diana, as Hazel drew the lengthening string to Dorris Kincaid's corner and caught her up; but the next minute they were around Helena in her turn, and they were laughing already, with pure glee; and five faces bent toward her, and five voices sang, —

"O, *don't* you know the Muffin Man?"

And Helena had to sing back that she did; and then the six made a perfect snarl around Mrs. Ripwinkley herself, and drew her in; and then they all swept off and came down across the room upon Mr. Oldways, who muttered under the singing, "seaven women! Well, the Bible says so, and I suppose it's come!" and then he held out both hands, while his hard face unbent in every wrinkle, with a smile that overflowed through all their furrowed channels, up to his very eyes; like some sparkling water that must find its level; and there were eight that knew the Muffin Man.

So nine, and ten, and up to fifteen; and then,

as their line broke away into fragments, still breathless with fun, Miss Craydocke said, — her eyes brimming over with laughing tears, that always came when she was gay,—

"There, now! we all know the "Muffin Man;" therefore it follows, mathematically, I believe, that we must all know each other. I think we'll try a sitting-down game next. I'll give you all something. Desire, you can tell them what to do with it, and Miss Ashburne shall predict the consequences."

So they had the "Presentation Game;" and the gifts, and the dispositions, and the consequences, when the whispers were over, and they were all declared aloud, were such hits and jumbles of sense and nonsense as were almost too queer to have been believed.

"Miss Craydocke gave me a butter firkin," said Mrs. Ripwinkley. "I was to put it in the parlor and plant vanilla beans in it; and the consequences would be that Birnam Wood would come to Dunsinane."

"She gave me a wax doll," said Helena. "I was to buy it a pair of high-heeled boots and a chignon; and the consequences would be that it would have to stand on her head."

"She gave me," said Mr. Oldways, "an iron spoon. I was to deal out sugar-plums with it; and the consequences would be that you would all go home."

"She gave me," said Lois James, "Woman's Rights. I shouldn't know what to do with them; and the consequence would be a terrible mortification to all my friends."

"She gave me," said Hazel, "a real good time. I was to pass it round, and the consequence would be an earthquake."

Then they had "Scandal;" a whisper, repeated rapidly from ear to ear. It began with, "Luclarion is in the kitchen making tea-biscuits;" and it ended with the horrible announcement that there were "two hundred gallons of hot pitch ready, and that everybody was to be tipped into it."

"Characters," and "Twenty Questions," and "How, When, and Where," followed; and then they were ready for a run again, and they played "Boston," in which Mr. Oldways, being "Sceattle," was continually being left out, whereupon he declared at last, that he didn't believe there was any place for him, or even that he was down anywhere on the map, and it wasn't fair, and he was going to secede; and that broke up the play; for the great fun of all the games had come to be Miss Craydocke and Uncle Titus, as it always is the great fun to the young ones when the elders join in,— the older and the soberer, the better sport; there is always something in the "fathers looking on;" that is the way I think it is among them who always do behold the face of the Father in heaven, — smiling upon their smiles, glowing upon their gladness.

In the tea-room, it was all even more delightful yet; it was further out into the garden, shaded at the back by the deep leafiness of grapevines, and a trellis work with arches in it that

ran up at the side, and would be gay by-and-by with scarlet runners, and morning-glories, and nasturtiums, that were shooting up strong and swift already, from the neatly weeded beds.

Inside, was the tall old semi-circular sideboard, with gingerbread grooves carved all over it; and the real brass dogs, with heads on their fore-paws, were lying in the fire-place, under the lilac boughs; and the square, plain table stood in the midst, with its glossy white cloth that touched the floor at the corners, and on it were the identical pink mugs, and a tall glass pitcher of milk, and plates of the thinnest and sweetest bread and butter, and early strawberries in a white basket lined with leaves, and the traditional round frosted cakes upon a silver plate with a network rim.

And Luclarion and Mrs. Ripwinkley waited upon them all, and it was still no party, to be compared or thought of with any salad and ice-pudding and Germania-band affair, such as they had had all winter; but something utterly fresh

and new and by itself, — place, and entertainment, and people, and all.

After tea, they went out into the garden; and there, under the shady horse-chestnuts, was a swing; and there were balls with which Hazel showed them how to play "class;" tossing in turn against the high brick wall, and taking their places up and down, according to the number of their catches. It was only Miss Craydocke's "Thread the needle" that got them in again; and after that, she showed them another simple old dancing game, the "Winding Circle," from which they were all merrily and mysteriously untwisting themselves with Miss Craydocke's bright little thin face and her fluttering cap ribbons, and her spry little trot leading them successfully off, when the door opened, and the grand Mr. Geoffrey walked in; the man who could manage State Street, and who had stood at the right hand of Governor and President, with his clear brain, and big purse, and generous hand, through the years of the long, terrible war; the

man whom it was something for great people to get to their dinners, or to have walk late into an evening drawing-room and dignify an occasion for the last half hour.

Mrs. Ripwinkley was just simply glad to see him; so she was to see Kenneth Kincaid, who came a few minutes after, just as Luclarion brought the tray of sweetmeats in, which Mrs. Ripwinkley had so far innovated upon the gracious-grandmother plan as to have after tea, instead of before.

The beautiful cockles and their rhymes got their heads all together around the large table, for the eating and the reading. Mr. Geoffrey and Uncle Titus sat talking European politics together, a little aside. The sugar-plums lasted a good while, with the chatter over them; and then, before they quite knew what it was all for, they had got slips of paper and lead pencils before them, and there was to be a round of "Crambo" to wind up.

"Oh, I don't know how!" and "I never can!"

were the first words, as they always are, when it was explained to the uninitiated; but Miss Craydocke assured them that "everybody could;" and Hazel said that "nobody expected real poetry; it needn't be more than two lines, and those might be blank verse, if they were *very* hard, but jingles were better; and so the questions and the words were written and folded, and the papers were shuffled and opened amid outcries of, "Oh, this is awful!" "*What* a word to get in!" "Why, they haven't the least thing to do with each other!"

"That's the beauty of it," said Miss Craydocke, unrelentingly; "to *make* them have; and it is funny how much things do have to do with each other when they once happen to come across."

Then there were knit brows, and desperate scratchings, and such silence that Mr. Geoffrey and Uncle Titus stopped short on the Alabama question, and looked round to see what the matter was.

Kenneth Kincaid had been modestly listening

to the older gentlemen, and now and then venturing to inquire or remark something, with an intelligence that attracted Mr. Geoffrey; and presently it came out that he had been south with the army; and then Mr. Geoffrey asked questions of him, and they got upon Reconstruction business, and comparing facts and exchanging conclusions, quite as if one was not a mere youth with only his eyes and his brains and his conscience to help him in his first grapple with the world in the tangle and crisis at which he found it, and the other a grave, practiced, keen-judging man, the counsellor of national leaders.

After all, they had no business to bring the great, troublesome, heavy-weighted world into a child's party. I wish men never would; though it did not happen badly, as it all turned out, that they did a little of it in this instance. If they had thought of it, "Crambo" was good for them too, for a change; and presently they did think of it; for Dorris called out in distress, real or pretended, from the table,—

"Kentie, here's something you must really take off my hands! I haven't the least idea what to do with it."

And then came a cry from Hazel, —

"No fair! We're all just as badly off, and there isn't one of us that has got a brother to turn to. Here's another for Mr. Kincaid."

"There are plenty more. Come, Mr. Oldways, Mr. Geoffrey, won't you try 'Crambo'? There's a good deal in it, as there is in most nonsense."

"We'll come and see what it is," said Mr. Geoffrey; and so the chairs were drawn up, and the gray, grave heads looked on over the young ones.

"Why, Hazel's got through!" said Lois, scratching violently at her paper, and obliterating three obstinate lines.

"Oh, I didn't bother, you see! I just stuck the word right in, like a pin into a pincushion, and let it go. There wasn't anything else to do with it."

"I've got to make my pincushion," said Dorris.

"I should think you had! Look at her! She's writing her paper all over! Oh, my gracious, she must have done it before!"

"Mother and Mr. Geoffrey are doing heaps, too! We shall have to publish a book," said Diana, biting the end of her pencil, and taking it easy. Diana hardly ever got the rhymes made in time; but then she always admired everybody's else, which was a good thing for somebody to be at leisure to do.

"Uncle Oldways and Lilian are folding up," said Hazel.

"Five minutes more," said Miss Craydocke, keeping the time with her watch before her. "Hush!"

When the five minutes were rapped out, there were seven papers to be read. People who had not finished this time might go on when the others took fresh questions.

Hazel began reading, because she had been ready first.

"'What is the difference between sponge-cake and doughnuts?' 'Hallelujah.'"

"'Airiness, lightness, and insipidity;
Twistiness, spiciness, and solidity.
Hallelujah! I've got through!
That is the best that I can do!"

There was a shout at Hazel's pinsticking.

"Now, Uncle Titus! You finished next."

"My question is a very comprehensive one," said Uncle Titus, with a very concise and suggestive word. 'How wags the world?' 'Slambang.'"

"'The world wags on
With lies and slang;
With show and vanity,
Pride and inanity,
Greed and insanity,
And a great slambang!'"

"That's only *one* verse," said Miss Craydocke.

"There's another; but he didn't write it down."

Uncle Titus laughed, and tossed his Crambo on the table. "It's true, so far, anyway," said he.

"*So far* is hardly ever quite true," said Miss Craydocke.

Lilian Ashburne had to answer the question whether she had ever read "Young's Night Thoughts," and her word was "Comet."

"'Pray might I be allowed a pun,
To help me through with just this one?
I've tried to read Young's Thoughts of Night,
But never yet could come it, quite.'"

"O, O, O! That's just like Lilian, with her soft little 'prays' and 'allow me's,' and her little pussy-cat ways of sliding through tight places, just touching her whiskers!"

"It's quite fair," said Lilian, smiling, "to slide through if you can."

"Now, Mr. Geoffrey."

And Mr. Geoffrey read,—

"'What is your favorite color?' 'One-hoss.'"

"'Do you mean, my friend, for a one-hoss shay,
Or the horse himself,— black, roan, or bay?
In truth, I think I can hardly say;
I believe, for a nag, "I bet on the gray."

"'For a shay, I would rather not have yellow,
Or any outright, staring color,
That makes the crowd look after a fellow,
And the little *gamins* hoot and bellow.

"'Do you mean for ribbons? or gowns? or eyes?
Or flowers? or gems? or in sunset skies?
For many questions, as many replies,
Drops of a rainbow take rainbow dyes.

"'The world is full, and the world is bright;
Each thing to its nature parts the light;
And each for its own to the Perfect sight
Wears that which is comely, and sweet, and right.'"

"O, Mr. Geoffrey! That's lovely!" cried the girl-voices, all around him. And Ada made a pair of great eyes at her father, and said,—

"What an awful humbug you have been, papa! To have kept the other side up with care all your life! Who ever suspected *that* of you?"

Diana and Hazel were not taken so much by surprise; their mother had improvised little nursery jingles for them all their baby days, and had played Crambo with them since; so they were very confident with their "Now, mother:" and looked calmly for something creditable.

"'What is your favorite name?'" read Mrs. Ripwinkley. "And the word is 'Stuff.'"

"'When I was a little child,
Looking very meek and mild,
I liked grand, heroic names,—
Of warriors, or stately dames:
Zenobia, and Cleopatra;
[No rhyme for that this side Sumatra;]
Wallace, and Helen Mar,— Clotilda,
Berengaria, and Brunhilda;
Maximilian; Alexandra;
Hertor, Juno, and Cassandra;

Charlemagne and Britomarte,
Washington and Bonaparte;
Victoria and Guinevere,
And Lady Clara Vere de Vere.
— Shall I go on with all this stuff,
Or do you think it is enough?
I cannot tell you what dear name
I love the best; I play a game;
And tender earnest doth belong
To quiet speech, not silly song.'"

"That's just like mother; I should have stopped as soon as I'd got the 'stuff' in; but she always shapes off with a little morriowl," said Hazel. "Now, Desire!"

Desire frantically scribbled a long line at the end of what she had written; below, that is, a great black morass of scratches that represented significantly the "Slough of Despond" she had got into over the winding up, and then gave,—

"'Which way would you rather travel,—north or south?' 'Goosey-gander.'"

"'O, goosey-gander!
If I might wander,
It should be toward the sun;
The blessed South
Should fill my mouth
With ripeness just begun.
For bleak hills, bare,
With stunted, spare,
And scrubby, piney trees,
Her gardens rare,
And vineyards fair,
And her rose-scented breeze.
For fearful blast,
Skies overcast,
And sudden blare and scare,
Long, stormless moons,
And placid noons,
And — all sorts of comfortablenesses,—
there!'"

"That makes me think of father's horse running away with him once," said Helena, "when

he had to head him right up against a brick wall, and knock everything all to smash before he could stop!"

"Anybody else?"

"Miss Kincaid, I think," said Mr. Geoffrey. He had been watching Dorris' face through the play, flashing and smiling with the excitement of her rhyming, and the slender, nervous fingers twisting tremulously the penciled slip while she had listened to the others.

"If it isn't all rubbed out," said Dorris, coloring and laughing to find how badly she had been treating her own effusion.

"You see it *was* rather an awful question,— 'What do you want most?' And the word is 'Thirteen.'"

She caught her breath a little quickly as she began:—

"'Between yourself, dear, myself, and the post,
There are the thirteen things that I want the most.

I want to be, sometimes, a little stronger;
I want the days to be a little longer;
I'd like to have a few less things to do;
I'd better like to better do the few:
I want — and this might almost lead my wishes,—
A bigger place to keep my mops and dishes.
I want a horse; I want a little buggy,
To ride in when the days grow hot and muggy;
I want a garden; and,— perhaps it's funny,—
But now and then I want a little money.
I want an easy way to do my hair;
I want an extra dress or two to wear;
I want more patience; and when all is given,
I think I want to die and go to heaven!'"

"I never saw such bright people in all my life!" said Ada Geoffrey, when the outcry of applause for Dorris had subsided, and they began to rise to go. "But the *worst* of all is papa! I'll never get over it of you, see if I do! Such a cheat! Why, it's like playing dumb all your

life, and then just speaking up suddenly in a quiet way, some day, as if it was nothing particular, and nobody cared!"

With Hazel's little divining-rod, Mrs. Ripwinkley had reached out, testing the world for her, to see what some of it might be really made of. Mrs. Geoffrey, from her side, had reached out in turn, also, into this fresh and simple opportunity, to see what might be there worth while.

"How was it, Aleck?" she asked of her husband, as they sat together in her dressing-room, while she brushed out her beautiful hair.

"Brightest people I have been among for a long time — and nicest," said the banker, concisely. "A real, fresh little home, with a mother in it. Good place for Ada to go, and good girls for her to know; like the ones I fell in love with a hundred years ago."

"That rhymed oracle,— to say nothing of the *fraction* of a compliment,— ought to settle it," said Mrs. Geoffrey, laughing.

"Rhymes have been the order of the evening. I expect to talk in verse for a week at least."

And then he told her about the "Crambo." A week after, Mrs. Ledwith was astonished to find, lying on the mantel in her sister's room, a card that had been sent up the day before,—

"Mrs. Alexander H. Geoffrey."

"REAL FOLKS."—*Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney.*

THE HUSKING FROLIC.

THERE were busy hands in the rustling sheaves,
And the crash of corn in its golden fall,
With a cheerful stir of the dry husk-leaves,
And a spirit of gladness over all.

The barn was a vast rustic bower that night. One end was heaped with corn ready for husking; the floor was neatly swept; and overhead the rafters were concealed by heavy garlands of white pine, golden maple leaves, and red oak branches, that swept from the roof downwards like a tent. Butternut leaves wreathed their clustering gold among the dark green hemlock, while sumach cones, with flame-colored leaves,

shot through the gorgeous forest branches. The rustic chandelier was in full blaze, while now and then a candle gleamed out through the garlands, starring them to the roof. Still, the illumination was neither broad nor bold, but shed a delicious starlight through the barn, that left much to the imagination, and concealed a thousand little signs of love-making that would have been ventured on more slily had the light been broader.

But the candles were aided by a host of sparkling eyes. The air was warm and rich with laughter and pleasant nonsense, bandied from group to group amid the rustling of cornhusks and the dash of golden ears, as they fell upon the heap that swelled larger and larger with every passing minute.

Uncle Nathan's great arm-chair had been placed in the centre of the barn, just beneath the hoop of lights. There he sat, ruddy and smiling, the very impersonation of a ripe harvest, with an iron fire-shovel fastened in some mysterious manner across his seat, a large splint basket between

his knees, working away with an energy that brought the perspiration like rain to his forehead. Up and down across the sharp edge of the shovel, he drew the slender corn, sending a shower of golden kernels into the basket with every pull of his arm, and stooping now and then with a well-pleased smile to even down the corn as it rose higher and higher in his basket.

Our old friend Salina sat at a little distance, with her fiery tresses rolled in upright puffs over each temple, and her great horn-comb towering therein like a battlement. A calico gown with very gay colors straggling over it, like honey-suckles and buttercups on a hill-side, adorned her lathy person, leaving a trim foot visible upon a bundle of stalks just within range of Uncle Nat's eye. Not that Salina intended it, or that Uncle Nat had any particular regard for neatly clad feet, but your strong-minded woman has an instinct which is sure to place the few charms sparsely distributed to the class, in conspicuous relief on all occasions.

As Salina sat perched on the base of the corn-stalk, tearing away vigorously at the husks, she cast an admiring glance now and then on the old man as his head rose and fell to the motion of his hands; but that glance was directly with-drawn with a defiant toss of the head, for Uncle Nat's eyes never once turned on the trim foot with its calf-skin shoe, much less on its owner, who began to be a little exasperated, as maidens of her class will when their best points are over-looked.

"Humph!" muttered the maiden, looking down at her calico, "one might as well have come with a linsey-woolsey frock on for what any body cares." In order to relieve these exasper-ated feelings Salina seized an ear of corn by the dead silk and rent away the entire husk at once; when lo! a long, plump red ear appeared, the very thing that half a dozen of the prettiest girls on the stalk-heap had been searching and wish-ing for all the evening.

This discovery was hailed with a shout. The

possession of a red ear, according to the established usage of all husking parties, entitled every gentleman present to a kiss from the holder.

The barn rang again with a clamor of voices and shouts of merry laughter. There was a general crashing down of ears upon the corn-heap. The roguish girls that had failed in finding the red ear, all abandoned work and began dancing over the stalk-heap, clapping their hands like mad things, and sending shout after shout of mellow laughter that went ringing cheerily among the starlit evergreens overhead.

But the young men, after the first wild shout, remained unusually silent, looking sheepishly on each other with a shy unwillingness to commence duty. No one seemed urgent to be first, and this very awkwardness set the girls off like mad again.

There sat Salina, amid the merry dim, brandishing the red ear in her hand, with a grim smile upon her mouth, prepared for a desperate defence.

"What's the matter, why don't you begin?" cried a pretty, black-eyed piece of mischief, from the top of the stalk-heap; "why, before this time, I thought you would have been snatching kisses by handsful."

"I'd like to see them try, that's all!" said the strong-minded female, sweeping a glance of scornful defiance over the young men.

"Now, Joseph Nash, are you agoing to stand that?" cried the pretty piece of mischief to a handsome young fellow that had haunted her neighborhood all the evening; "afraid to fight for a kiss, are you?"

"No, not exactly!" said Joseph, rolling back his wristbands and settling himself in his clothes; "it's the after-clap, if I shouldn't happen to please," he added, in a whisper, that brought his lips so close to the cheek of his fair tormentor, that he absolutely gathered toll from its peachy bloom before starting on his pilgrimage, a toll that brought the glow still more richly to her face.

The maiden laughing, till the tears sparkled in her eyes, pushed him toward Salina in revenge.

But Salina lost no time in placing herself on the defensive. She started up, flung the bundle of stalks on which she had been seated at the head of her assailant, kicked up a tornado of loose husks with her trim foot, and stood brandishing her red ear furiously, as if it had been a dagger in the hand of Lady Macbeth, rather than inoffensive food for chickens.

"Keep your distance, Joe Nash; keep clear of me, now I tell you; I ain't afraid of the face of man; so back out of this while you have a chance, you can't kiss me, I tell you, without you are stronger than I be, and I know you are!"

"I shan't — shan't I?" answered Joe, who was reinforced by half a dozen laughing youngsters, all eager for a frolic; "well, I never did take a stump from a gal in my life, so here goes for that kiss."

Joe bounded forward as he spoke, and made a snatch at Salina with his great hands; but, with

the quickness of a deer, she sprang aside, leaving her black silk apron in his grasp. Another plunge, and down came the ear of corn across his head, rolling a shower of red kernels among his thick brown hair.

But Joe had secured his hold, and after another dash, that broke her ear of corn in twain, Salina was left defenceless, with nothing but her two hands to fight with; but she plied these with great vigor, leaving long, crimson marks upon her assailant's cheeks with every blow, till, in very self-defence, he was compelled to lessen the distance between her face and his, thus receiving her assault upon his shoulders.

To this day it is rather doubtful if Joe Nash really did gather the fruits of his victory. If he did, no satisfactory report was made to the eager ring of listeners; and Salina stalked away from him with an air of ineffable disdain, as if her defeat had been deprived of its just reward.

But the red ear gave rights to more than one, and, in her surprise, Salina was taken unawares

by some, who had no roguish black-eyed lady-loves behind them. There was no doubt in the matter now. Salina paid her penalty more than once, and with a degree of resignation that was really charming to behold. Once or twice she was seen in the midst of the *malée*, to cast quick glances toward Uncle Nathan, who sat in his easy-chair laughing till the tears streamed down his cheeks.

Then there rose a loud clamor of cries and laughter for Uncle Nathan to claim his share of the fun. Salina declared that she gave up — that she was out of breath — that she couldn't expect to hold her own with a child of three years old. In truth, she made several strides toward the centre of the barn, covering the movement with great generalship, by any attempt to gather up her hair and fasten the comb in securely, which was generous and womanly, considering how inconvenient it would have been for Uncle Nat, with all his weight, to have walked over the mountain of corn-stalks.

"Come, hurry up, Uncle Nat, before she catches breath again," cried half a dozen voices, and the girls began to dance and clap their hands like mad things once more. "Uncle Nat, Uncle Nat, it's your turn — it's your turn now!"

Uncle Nathan threw the half-shelled ear upon the loose corn in his basket, placed a plump hand on each arm of his chair, and lifted himself to a standing posture. He moved deliberately toward the maiden, who was still busy with her lurid tresses. His brown eyes glistened, a broad, bland smile spread and deepened over his face, and stealing one heavy arm around Salina's waist — who gave a little shriek as if quite taken by surprise — he decorously placed a firm and modest salute upon the unresisting — I am not sure that it was not the answering — lips of that strong-minded woman.

How unpleasant this duty may have been to Uncle Nat I cannot pretend to say; but there was a genial redness about his face when he turned it to the light, as if it had caught a reflec-

tion from Salina's tresses, and his brown eyes were flooded with sunshine, as if the whole affair had been rather agreeable than otherwise.

In fact, considering that the old man had been very decidedly out of practice in that kind of amusement, Uncle Nat acquitted himself famously.

When the troop of mischievous girls flocked around, tantalizing him with fresh shouts of laughter and eyes full of glee, the dear old fellow's face brightened with mischief akin to their own. His twinkling eyes turned from face to face, as if puzzled which saucy mouth to silence first. But the first stride forward brought him knee deep into the corn-stalks, and provoked a burst of laughter that made the garlands on the rafters tremble again. Away sprang the girls to the very top of the heap, wild with glee and daring him to follow.

The tumult aroused Salina. She twisted up her hair with a quick sweep of the hand, thrust the comb in as if it had been a pitchfork, and

darting forward, seized Uncle Nat by the arm just as he was about to make a second plunge after his pretty tormentors.

Slowly and steadily, that strong-minded female wheeled the defenceless man round till he faced the arm-chair. Then quietly insinuating that "he had better not make an old fool of himself more than once a day," she cast a look of scornful triumph upon the crowd of naughty girls, and moved back to her place again.

The youngsters now all fell to work more cheerfully for this burst of fun. The stalks rustled, the corn flashed downward, the golden heap grew and swelled to the light, slowly and surely, like a miser's gold. All went merrily on. Among those who worked least and laughed loudest, was the little constable that had taken so deep an interest in the affair that morning. Never did two ferret eyes twinkle so brightly, or peer more closely into every nook and corner.

Two or three times Mary Fuller entered the barn, whispered a few words to Uncle Nat or

Salina, and retreated again. At last Aunt Hannah appeared, hushing the mirth as night shadows drink up the sunshine.

She made a telegraphic sign to Salina, who instantly proceeded to tie on her apron, and communicate with Uncle Nathan, who arose from his seat, spreading his hands as if about to bestow a benediction upon the whole company, and desired that the ladies would follow Salina into the house, where they would find a barrel of new cider just tapped in the stoop, and some gingercake and such things set out in the front room.

As for the gentlemen, it was always manners for them to wait till the fair sex was served, besides, all hands would be wanted to clear out the barn for a frolic after supper. . . . .

Down came the girls like a flock of birds, chatting, laughing, and throwing coquettish glances behind, as they followed Salina from the barn. Up sprang the young men, clearing away stalks, kicking the husks before them in clouds, and carrying them off by armsful, till a corn-house in

the yard was choked up with them, and the barn was left with nothing but its evergreen garlands, its starry lights, and a golden heap of corn sloping down from each corner.

"THE OLD HOMESTEAD."—*Mrs. Ann S. Stephens.*

PICNICKING IN THE PINE WOODS.

A PARTY of gay young girls were fluttering like a crowd of butterflies about the lawn and portico of a handsome mansion in the village of St. Clair, State of Michigan. The rich grass of this lawn, which sloped down a gentle hill-side, was besprent with the original wild roses which had bloomed there for generations before the first stone was laid of the house which now looked down upon them with a civilized and stately air. They had never been ruthlessly turned from the native beds where they blushed in beautiful modesty, although a fine walk, bordered with flowers dressed in cultivated charms, led up to the porticos, at either end of which a magnificent oak

flourished, giving the place its appropriate name of Oak Hill.

The owners and inhabitants of the mansion were a young couple from one of the eastern cities, who made this a summer residence, because the business of the husband called him hither, and the wife was much too fond of him to think of spending "the season" away from him at any of the fashionable resorts. Nevertheless, the young bride sometimes found it lonely in a place so far removed from the society of former friends, and this summer she had persuaded a younger sister to share her new home with her, instead of going with their parents to the seaside. It was only after promising her faithfully that she should not be devoured by mosquitoes, bears, or "sarpents," carried off by Indians, nor fed exclusively upon corn-cakes, that she succeeded in wiling this sister so far into the barbarous Arcadia. After getting her here, it was in an attempt to make time pass pleasantly to her, that the mistress of the house had invited

a few of the young ladies of the place to take tea with them. This radiant bevy of girls it was who, tea being over, were now enjoying the splendor of sunset out of doors.

Mr. and Mrs. Florence, the host and hostess, stood in the door regarding the laughing group with smiling faces. He was a bright fine-looking man, the embodiment of enterprise and energy; yet the flute and the volume of "Cousin" which lay on the chair near him, as well as many out and in-door evidences of his taste and culture, proved that, while a man of business, he was not solely "a business man." It was evident that his pretty, intellectual-browed wife regarded him in another light, as her white hand sought his shoulder and she turned her beaming blue eyes upon him with a glance full of devotion. She respected the ability which was fast surrounding her with the accessories of wealth, but she loved the fine sentiments, blended with a touch of chivalry, and the noble qualities which had first attracted her regard. He, too, was looking, with

quite the old lover-like air, at her brown ringlets and pure complexion, now softly flushed by the sunset light.

"Do look at Anne, George! isn't she beautiful just now?" said the wife, as her eyes chanced to fall upon her sister.

Anne had been wandering over the lawn with the others, gathering rose-buds as she went, until she had her hat full, and she was now seated on the steps, swiftly weaving them into a long garland, with which she intended to drape the marble urn which stood near her. Her light silk dress lay around her with that kind of airy grace which distinguished everything she wore. As she bent over her work, her hair fell in clusters of dark curls upon her shoulders, and they could see her cheeks glowing through their shadow with the richest hue of health and youth. As she finished her garland, she arose to adjust it, when a transfiguration of the landscape, which the glory of the sunset had wrought, startled her,

and she stood with kindling eyes, her own fair person bathed in the ruddy light.

At the foot of the hill, separated from it only by a picturesque road, the river St. Clair flowed broad, swift, and majestic, its waters tinged with as rich a purple as ever the Bay of Naples could boast beneath an Italian sky. Some twenty or thirty vessels were in sight, their sails taking on a most cloud-like and spiritual effect from the rosy atmosphere. The Canadian shore, in many places clothed with forest to the water's edge, was just far enough away to have its reality put on a dream-like air. The scene *was* lovely, as Anne Helfenstein felt it to be. The young ladies, generally, who were making merry enjoying the freshness of the lawn, did not seem to care for the beauty of the hour, as young ladies are apt not to have much appreciation of fine scenery, except for riding and boating purposes, nor for fine weather, except that it is favorable to best dresses and promenades. So they soon called Anne from her reverie, and gathering

around Mr. Florence, they begged him for some music.

"By-and-by I will play for you; but, in the mean time, I wish to get your approval of a plan for an excursion."

"An excursion! Oh, that is delightful! Shall it be a boat-ride to the island, and a picnic beneath the old apple-tree, planted there by the French a hundred years ago? or a carriage ride to the fort? or what?"

"Oh, a much more serious affair!" replied Mr. Florence. "I have just been thinking of it, and have not yet spoken of it even to Lissa here. I warn you that but few of you will be pleased with the idea; only those who have plenty of courage, health, and a spice of adventure in their composition, will accept the proposition. You know I had to go up to Thunder Bay, last autumn, and wander around in that wild region for three weeks, with no company except that of my two men. I was desperately lonely; but I should have enjoyed it with good company. Why can't

a party of you ladies propose yourselves for a regular camping-out frolic, and go along with me next time? I will promise to arm and equip the volunteers, and to find two or three gallant men to act as sentinels and aids-de-camp."

"Mercy! I wouldn't go for *the world!*" screamed little Miss Higgins.

"It would *ruin* our complexion!" observed Miss Dahlia, the beauty of the village.

And "Dear me! what an idea!" said the others.

"But are you in earnest, George?" asked his wife. "Could we do it? Is there really no danger from Indians or wild animals, nor too great hardships to be endured?"

"I did not meet an Indian while I was out, last fall; and should there be any, they will be friendly. We *might* meet a bear, but we will go prepared for that; a little excitement will be delightful, you know! We will not start until the September frosts have killed any mosquitos there may be lurking in the depths of the woods. As

for complexion, Miss Dahlia, I will promise to bring you all back plumper, rosier, and handsomer than when you set out — a little darker, more akin to the dusky maidens of the wood — but all the more enchanting for that. Fried bark will be an excellent dish, in case we get out of other provisions. And a race, you know, with a bear or a 'painter,' will give you a chance to show which of you can make the best time."

Here a general scream arose from the ladies, followed by a little laugh.

"I, for one, am ready to make one of your party," said sister Anne. "You think I am only an affected city girl, because my bonnet is just as lovely and as fashionable as it can be. But you will see that I can don a straw hat and squaw pantalettes with just as good a grace! Oh, dear, I am so impatient! How soon do you think of going, brother George?"

He looked at the beautiful girl and laughed.

"Well said for you, Anne! Let a few more

enroll their names, and the list will be satisfactory."

"But what gentlemen will accompany us?" asked Miss Dahlia.

"Gentlemen!" exclaimed Mr. Florence, in much surprise. "Don't expect to have any! One or two savages besides myself, but nobody nice enough to help you over logs, or shoot birds for your breakfast."

"Did you not say we should be escorted by 'gallant men'?" asked the beauty, in a disappointed tone. "Oh, I am certain I shall not wish to go, on account of the panthers: besides, I take cold so easily."

Anne looked slyly aside at her brother, as the lady aroused herself thus, and now her eyes were as full of mirthful scorn as awhile ago they had been of poetic reverie.

So much talking and discussion of pro's and con's now occurred, that the music was forgotten, and it was time for the company to disperse before the matter was thoroughly settled. Three

others pledged themselves to the adventure, besides Anne and Mrs. Florence; and this number was considered sufficient, though two or three more recruits, if they should offer themselves, would not be rejected.

Sallie Wildman, a dashing creature, not handsome, but full of spirit — one of those who always ride the fleetest horses and dance the greatest number of times, and who, despite their want of beauty, are always attractive on account of their gayety — was the first to enlist. She was followed by Jessie Lincoln, a sweet little gipsy, not a bit afraid of her complexion, which was already as brown as it could be. Miss Dahlia, despite her protestations, brought up the rear, she having overheard Mrs. Florence remark to her husband that Dick Burton would be a good person to invite.

Dick Burton was the gentleman at whom she was at present levelling the full power of her large hazel eyes, whenever she had opportunity.

It was arranged that they were to start about

the 25th of September, when the weather was usually the fairest, to be gone at least three weeks. Mr. Florence was to superintend all arrangements for the comfort and safety of the trip. The ladies were only to look out for stout shoes, gloves, and dresses.

It was the last day of summer when the proposition was made. Anne Helfenstein could hardly wait for the twenty-fifth. At her suggestion, the costume prepared for the occasion was a demi-Bloomer dress, combining comfort, lightness, freedom of motion, and a piquancy of look quite becoming to the youthful wearers. This dress was not to be exhibited to the gentlemen until they were actually mustered for the expedition.

Anne had preserved, from a child, her love of the beautiful in nature. If she enjoyed a merry dance in the *salons* of a watering-place, of a summer evening, she was perhaps even more perfectly happy sitting on some moonlit rock with the salt spray of the ocean dashing at her feet. Full of sentiment as she was, she had never been

in love. Eighteen years of age, and never been in love! In truth, this wayward and yet gentle, capricious and yet tender, proud and yet humble young girl had some peculiar notions of her own about the grand passion, which nobody understood — for she had never come to an understanding with anybody upon the subject.

She had an airy and prettily-furnished chamber in her sister's house, which overlooked the river for miles. It was a constant delight to her to sit and weave intangible tissues of dreams as she watched the shadows and the varying tints sweep over the river. Usually it was of a deep blue, but when the cold breezes from the north stirred it into deeper ripples, rich purples and greens, and flashes of gold would sail over its surface. There was plenty of life upon it, too, from the tiny skiff which plied like a shuttle from shore to shore, to the great steamers, burdened with produce and laden with passengers, which went puffing by on the way to Chicago and the upper lakes.

Often the sound of their labored breathing would break in upon her midnight sleep, and she would spring from her bed and sit in her window to watch them passing almost at her feet, their colored lights trembling like inverted rainbows in the shimmering waters, and all the solitudes of darkness broken by their echoes.

The morning of the twenty-fifth of September came at last. The dull days of the equinoctial storm were over, and the weather was resplendent. The group of adventurers gathered upon the dock, awaiting the steamer upon which they were to embark. There had been a question as to whether they should venture the whole journey in a sail-boat, or have their boat taken in tow by the steamer, until they reached Saginaw, the last port this side of Thunder Bay. The most of the party were in favor of trusting entirely to sails, and eschewing steam upon this occasion, but, owing to the pleadings of Miss Dahlia, they had finally agreed upon the steamer. Their provisions, blankets, tents, including their whole kit,

was safely stowed away in their little vessel, which rocked itself with an impatient air at the idea of being tied to its mother's apron-strings.

"Call the roll," commanded Captain George, as the distant puffing of the expected boat was heard.

Sergeant Dick Burton stepped forward with a roll which looked wondrously as if there might be a link of Bologna sausage inside. He wore buckskin breeches and a hunting-shirt, with a brace of pistols and a knife stuck in his belt. He looked so fierce in his bear-skin cap that Miss Dahlia gave an involuntary little shriek and giggle; but confessed to herself, the next moment, that she had never seen him look so irresistible. Sergeant Dick was a tall, athletic fellow, of true western growth, vigorous as the pines which had waved above his infancy, a dangerous youth, fitted to cope with savages, or to troll a love-song to the tinkling of his guitar of a moonlit evening on the sweet St. Clair.

His black eyes flashed with a sudden admira-

tion as he called out "Anne Helfenstein," and heard the silvery response of "Here!" How charming she looked in her trim little calf-skin boots, her full trousers gathered down to the dainty ankle, her rather short skirt, and broad-brimmed hat tied beneath her chin with rose-colored ribbon. She, too, had a leather belt about her waist in which was stuck a knife with a blade some five or six inches in length.

"Lizzie Florence!"

"Here!"

(He had forgotten to give precedence to the married lady, as a gallant officer should, the moment his eye had rested upon sister Anne.)

"Sallie Wildman!"

"Here!"

"Jessie Lincoln!"

"Here!"

"Clementine Dahlia!"

"Here!"

"Harry Hugay!"

"Here!"

Harry Hugay "was a host in himself." The ladies were all in uniform — even Miss Dahlia had a knife in a belt. Upon being questioned as to the uses they expected to put their weapons to, she replied that "Miss Helfenstein had advised their getting them, not only as a convenience to cut their bread and dried venison with, but to use in case of an emergency."

"What would you call an emergency?" inquired Sergeant Dick.

"Why, supposing a wild animal should make an attack upon some small portion of the party who were separated from the rest," replied Anne, "and the guns should be mislaid, or should refuse to go off, and the creature actually got one of us in his embrace, a knife would do good service, would it not?"

"If she had the self-possession to use it — right in the eye," answered he, looking curiously at her, as her face took on a dauntless air at the picture of the danger she had drawn.

"I should pursue the usual course of young

ladies — faint away in his arms," laughed Jessie Lincoln.

"I should die of horror!" murmured Clementine.

Meantime, the Minne-ha-ha had rounded to her dock, ropes were thrown out, the plank made ready, and the party hurried upon deck; the sail-boat was taken in tow, and with a rousing cheer from those on board and those who had gathered on the wharf, the party were fairly on their way.

Heedless of the curiosity displayed by the many passengers, they gathered in a group upon the upper deck to enjoy the scenery.

The weather gave promise of one of those long stretches of calm and sunshine which flow like a river of gold through a portion of our autumns. It was cool and brilliant. A purple splendor softened the horizon, and above the sky was deep and pure. Here and there, clusters of graceful elms dotted the yellow, sloping banks, and in places leaned over the water; while wild grape-vines swung from them like sportive Undines

who had filled their hands with grapes, and were ready to plunge into the cool depths which mirrored them. Forests of oaks, maples and beeches, glowing with every gorgeous hue, and flanked by sombre pines, as they stood, motionless and Titanic, beneath the yellow sunshine, made up an effect of inconceivable magnificence.

They almost regretted leaving the enchanted river, when, after twelve miles of beauty, they passed the village of Port Huron and came upon the lovely head of the St. Clair, where the white buildings of Fort Gratiot gleam amid the pines which shadow the high banks. From thence Lake Huron spread away in a silver sheet, and they were soon upon its waters.

It is needless to say that they were all unwilling to eat their first dinner after the regular humdrum manner, and to sleep, the first night out, in cosy berths in comfortable state-rooms. They were "eager for the fray," as Harry Hugay said — to begin the hardships and dangers for which they felt themselves so well prepared.

They were therefore happy to steam into the harbor of the lumbering settlement at Saginaw, where they bade farewell to the Minne-ha-ha, twenty-six hours after embarking in her, and betook themselves to their own little vessel, to the music of "Hail Columbia," and "Go it, Boots!" as played by the brass band of the steamer.

A stiff breeze from the right direction sent the "Wild Swan" flying over the water like a bird. The gentlemen were all good sailors, and controlled their fairy craft as easily as a mother would an obedient child. As the spray dashed from her prow like a shower of diamonds, the spirits of the ladies rose as fresh and bright as the morning air; and, in compliment to their boat, they sang, with voices which rang in sweet accord —

"On thy fair bosom, silver lake,
The Wild Swan spreads her snowy sail;
Around her breast the ripples break
As down she bears before the gale."

Old Nip sat at the rudder, and rolled his eyes in delight. And here we must beg pardon for not introducing "Nip" to our readers before; for, though he is only a colored person, acting in the capacity of "chief cook and bottle-washer" to the company, he is accustomed to receiving many marks of respect and attention. He was a sailor by profession, and may originally have been named "Neptune" from his fondness for the sea, as well as for the self-importance which is one of his distinguishing characteristics; if so, this flattering cognomen has gradually diminished to "Nip." Nip is not only a sailor, but a tolerable cook, and, altogether, a most efficient aid to such an enterprise. About two hours after getting under way, he served them up a comfortable lunch. The ladies insisted upon using their belt-knives for cutting their sandwiches, and this formidable table-cutlery doubtless gave their cold chicken and biscuit a keener relish.

It was nearly sunset when the Wild Swan

skimmed across Thunder Bay and folded her wings in a little cove not far from the mouth of the River Sable. Now came a time of the most joyous excitement. Old Nip was in his element — literally — for, in his haste to disembark his cooking utensils, he made a false step and reeled overboard. He laughed as heartily as any one, when he got to shore and shook the water off him.

"Better be dis chile dan de provisions. He am neder sugah nor salt, and some of dem boys are, hi! hi!" he chuckled.

An immense forest stretched back into the country from the shore. The trees were mostly pines, but many of a grayer foliage gave variety to what would otherwise have been a rather gloomy monotony of color. A clump of oaks stood near the water, on a slight elevation covered with fine, velvety grass, a little crisp with the late frosts. This spot was selected for their first night's camping-ground. The gentlemen busied themselves assisting Nip. The ladies

were all very anxious to render themselves useful, but, not being permitted, they ran about, making short voyages of discovery and observation, scientific and otherwise, until, being wearied, they threw themselves, like a cluster of Amazonian wood-nymphs, under the trees, and awaited the result of the labors of their attendants.

As the sun set, the still air took on just that degree of chilliness which made the fire which Nip had kindled as agreeable as it was cheerful.

"That's right, Nip! Pile on the brush! tote up the logs! Ha, ladies, isn't this glorious?" cried Harry Hugay, as the smoke rolled away in huge volumes, and the flames rose, sparkling and crackling, breaking in upon the coming twilight, with a weird and fanciful effect.

Two tents were pitched beneath the trees; some hemlock branches were found for the construction of mattresses, over which blankets were spread; and now, as the night closed in, the birds and beasts of Thunder Bay might have wit-

nessed a novel scene, such as those lonely shores had never before been the theatre of.

The huge fire lit up everything in the vicinity, making grotesque and almost frightful shadows farther back in the wood. The waves, as they ran into the cove, and broke upon the beach with a gentle murmur, caught a golden glimmer upon their crests; and the little vessel, snugly moored, was lit up, her masts standing out in bold relief against the darkness which brooded farther away over the lake. The white tents, the beautiful women and the busy men, the grand old trees, and Nip, like some black sorcerer, bending over his caldrons, were vividly revealed in the flickering red light, while night, silence, and vast space stretched away in the background.

A cloth was spread upon the grass, and a fine display of elegant table-furniture was made by the tasteful and happy Nip. There was a tin plate and a tin cup for each person, two superb new shingles, one holding sea-biscuit, the other Boston crackers, a salt-cellar twisted from a

crimson oak-leaf, and a round wooden box full of the nicest powdered sugar. A cold boiled ham occupied the place of the principal dish. When the kettle had boiled, Mrs. Florence asked permission of the chief cook to make the tea, which privilege he graciously granted, with a flourish and bow.

"Sartin, Missus, I concedes de superior manner in which you prepare dat infusun. I nebah was pertickler fond of black tea, but when it comes to de coffee, missus, I must 'spectfully decline any supervision. I is complement to de coffee, Missus."

Mrs. Florence conceded his accomplishments in making coffee.

"Our es-steamed friend looks like a sable sorcerer compounding a magic draught for the lords and ladies whom he has bewitched," remarked Mr. Hugay, as white wreaths of mist arose from the damp garments of the old negro, as he bent over his kettles and pans before the crackling fire.

Just as Lissa placed the teapot upon a shingle by her plate, Captain George came from the wood with his last armful of hemlock brush for the couches.

"What savory smell is this which salutes my hungry nostrils?" he cried, sniffing in a most ungentlemanly manner, as he came from the tent. "Answer, Nip; what have you been doing to merit our especial commendation?"

"I can't say, Massa; I is not responsible for dat odoriferous flagrance. S'pecks Massa Dick knows most about it. Smells to me like fish."

The tin horn which Captain George wore at his belt was raised to his lips to summon by its sweet strains his company to mess. Just as they seated themselves, *a la* Turk, around the lowly board, Sergeant Dick made his appearance from the other side of the great fire, bearing on a long shingle a black bass broiled to the last point of perfection. He had stolen down to the cove, to a deep and secluded little inlet, and, throwing out an impromptu line and bait, had succeeded,

almost at the first trial, in catching a fine fish, which he had prepared unknown to the others, and broiled on the coals.

"Bravo, Sergeant! We're much obliged for such a testimonial of friendship, if it *is* a little of-fish-us," said Harry Hugay. "I always supposed you had a tenor voice, but now I see you have a bass-oh."

"Our captain has decided that you cannot be allowed to worry the company with your execrable puns, Mr. Hugay," said Anne. "You are to be fined for every one you are guilty of."

"Then, at least, they will be sure to be fine puns," he returned. "But I beg the company's pardon, and promise to desist. A true soldier should never be guilty of so cowardly an offence. Shall I pass your cup for some tea, Miss Dahlia? Everybody's at liberty to drink as much as they can get; there's no danger of their being laid under this table."

Everybody laughed, of course; they were just in the mood for laughing at any and everything.

Amidst mirth and hilarity the meal was disposed of, and very few fragments were left; for the appetites of the party were as sharp as the huge knives with which they managed to slice their fish and ham. Even dainty Miss Dahlia did not scruple to confess that she had been absolutely hungry.

After supper, they sat at a convenient distance from the fire, and the tide of conversation flowed fast and merry. There were songs, too; and Sergent Dick had out his guitar, which he had brought at the instance of Miss Clementine. This lady was very happy, for she sat by the Sergeant's side, and, contented in this nearness, did not observe that his black eyes, softened in their usually piercing light, were turned often and lingeringly upon Anne, who sat richly enjoying the scene, but more quiet than the others. Occasionally her beautiful eyes would be upturned to the starlit heavens, or brooding upon the darkness of the forest, as if striving to fathom its mystery; and when a whippoorwill, far away

in its depths, struck up its melancholy music, she made them all be still and listen.

Nip kept up a glorious fire. It was a curious sight to see those charming women in their *outre* attire, the red light of the flames, flashing over their lovely, animated faces, and sparkling upon the knives which glittered in their leather belts. They all entered into the spirit of the scene as heartily as their bolder companions could desire.

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It was nearly midnight before any of the party were willing to break the enchantment of this their first night in camp; but fatigue at last overcame their high spirits, and with drowsy good-nights, they retired within their tents, while Nip wrapped himself in a blanket and lay down before the fire, which he had replenished with some choice logs.

From a story written for Godey's Magazine, by the Author of "LUCY IN THE CITY," THE TALLOW FAMILY," &c.

A GOLDEN WEDDING.

A DROP of rain roused Sylvia from the contemplation of an imaginary portrait of the little Cuban, and looking skyward she saw that the frolicsome wind had prepared a practical joke for them in the shape of a thunder-shower. A consultation was held, and it was decided to run on till a house appeared, in which they would take refuge till the storm was over. On they went, but the rain was in greater haste than they, and a summary drenching was effected before the toot of a dinner-horn guided them to shelter.

Landing they marched over the fields, a moist and mirthful company, toward a red farm-house standing under venerable elms, with a patriarchal

air which promised hospitable treatment and good cheer. A promise speedily fulfilled by the lively old woman, who appeared with an energetic "Shoo!" for the speckled hens congregated in the porch, and a hearty welcome for the weather-beaten strangers.

"Sakes alive!" she exclaimed; "you be in a mess, ain't you? Come right in and make yourselves at home. Abel, take the men folks up chamber, and fit 'em out with anything dry you kin lay hands on. Phebe, see to this poor little creeter, and bring her down lookin' less like a drownded kitten. Nat, clear up your wittlin's so's't they kin toast their feet when they come down; and, Cinthy, don't dish up dinner jest yet."

These directions were given with such vigorous illustration, and the old face shone with such friendly zeal, that the four submitted at once, sure that the kind soul was pleasing herself in serving them, and finding something very attractive in the place, the people, and their own

position. Abel, a staid farmer of forty, obeyed his mother's order regarding the "men folks;" and Phebe, a buxom girl of sixteen, led Sylvia to her own room, eagerly offering her best.

As she dried and redressed herself, Sylvia made sundry discoveries, which added to the romance and the enjoyment of the adventure. A smart gown lay on the bed in the low chamber, also various decorations upon chair and table, suggesting that some festival was afloat; and a few questions elicited the facts. Grandpa had seven sons and three daughters, all living, all married, and all blessed with flocks of children. Grandpa's birthday was always celebrated by a family gathering; but to-day, being the fiftieth anniversary of his wedding, the various households had resolved to keep it with unusual pomp; and all were coming for a supper, a dance, and a "sing" at the end. Upon receipt of which intelligence Sylvia proposed an immediate departure; but the grandmother and daughter cried out at this, pointed to the still falling rain, the lowering

sky, the wet heap on the floor, and insisted on the strangers all remaining to enjoy the festival, and give an added interest by their presence.

Half promising what she wholly desired, Sylvia put on Phebe's second best blue gingham gown, for the preservation of which she added a white apron, and completing the whole with a pair of capacious shoes, went down to find her party and reveal the state of affairs. They were bestowed in the prim, best parlor, and greeted her with a peal of laughter, for all were *en costume.*

Abel was a stout man, and his garments hung upon Moor with a melancholy air; Mark had disdained them, and with an eye to effect laid hands on an old uniform, in which he looked like a volunteer of 1812; while Warwick's superior height placed Abel's wardrobe out of the question; and grandpa, taller than any of his seven goodly sons, supplied him with a sober suit, — roomy, square-flapped, and venerable, — which became him, and with his beard produced

the curious effect of a youthful patriarch. To Sylvia's relief it was unanimously decided to remain, trusting to their penetration to discover the most agreeable method of returning the favor; and regarding the adventure as a welcome change, after two days' solitude, all went out to dinner prepared to enact their parts with spirit.

The meal being despatched, Mark and Warwick went to help Abel with some out-door arrangements; and begging grandma to consider him one of her own boys, Moor tied on an apron and fell to work with Sylvia, laying the long table which was to receive the coming stores. True breeding is often as soon felt by the uncultivated as by the cultivated; and the zeal with which the strangers threw themselves into the business of the hour won the family, and placed them all in friendly relations at once. The old lady let them do what they would, admiring everything, and declaring over and over again that her new assistants "beat her boys and girls

to nothin' with their tastiness and smartness." Sylvia trimmed the table with common flowers till it was an inviting sight before a viand appeared upon it, and hung green boughs about the room, with candles here and there to lend a festal light. Moor trundled a great cheese in from the dairy, brought milk-pans without mishap, disposed dishes, and caused Nat to cleave to him by the administration of surreptitous titbits and jocular suggestions; while Phebe tumbled about in every one's way, quite wild with excitement; and grandma stood in her pantry like a culinary general, swaying a big knife for a baton, as she issued orders and marshalled her forces, the busiest and merriest of them all.

. . . . . .

Away clattered Nat to be immediately absorbed into the embraces of a swarm of relatives who now began to arrive in a steady stream.

Old and young, large and small, rich and poor, with overflowing hands or trifles humbly given, all were received alike, all hugged by grandpa,

kissed by grandma, shaken half breathless by Uncle Abel, welcomed by Aunt Patience, and danced around by Phebe and Nat till the house seemed a great hive of hilarious and affectionate bees. At first the strangers stood apart, but Phebe spread their story with such complimentary additions of her own that the family circle opened wide and took them in at once.

Sylvia was enraptured with the wilderness of babies, and leaving the others to their own devices followed the matrons to "Patience's room," and gave herself up to the pleasant tyranny of the small potentates, who swarmed over her as she sat on the floor, tugging at her hair, exploring her eyes, covering her with moist kisses, and keeping up a babble of little voices more delightful to her than the discourse of the flattering mamas who benignly surveyed her admiration and their offspring's prowess.

The young people went to romp in the barn; the men, armed with umbrellas, turned out *en masse* to inspect the farm and stock, and com-

pare notes over pig pens and garden gates. But Sylvia lingered where she was, enjoying a scene which filled her with a tender pain and pleasure, for each baby was laid on grandma's knee, its small virtues, vices, ailments, and accomplishments rehearsed, its beauties examined, its strength tested, and the verdict of the family oracle pronounced upon it as it was cradled, kissed and blessed on the kind old heart which had room for every care and joy of those who called her mother. It was a sight the girl never forgot, because just then she was ready to receive it. Her best lessons did not come from books, and she learned one then as she saw the fairest success of a woman's life while watching this happy grandmother with fresh faces framing her withered one, daughterly voices chorusing good wishes, and the harvest of half a century of wedded life beautifully garnered in her arms.

The fragrance of coffee and recollections of Cynthia's joyful aberrations at such periods caused a breaking up of the maternal conclave.

The babies were borne away to simmer between blankets until called for. The women unpacked baskets, brooded over teapots, and kept up an harmonious clack as the table was spread with pyramids of cake, regiments of pies, quagmires of jelly, snow-banks of bread, and goldmines of butter; every possible article of food, from baked beans to wedding cake, finding a place on that sacrificial altar.

Fearing to be in the way, Sylvia departed to the barn, where she found her party in a chaotic Babel; for the offshoots had been as fruitful as the parent tree, and some four dozen young immortals were in full riot. The bashful roosting with the hens on remote lofts and beams; the bold flirting or playing in the full light of day; boys whooping, girls screaming, all effervescing as if their spirits had reached the explosive point and must find vent in noise. Mark was in his element, introducing all manner of new games, the liveliest of the old and keeping the revel at

its height; for rosy, bright-eyed girls were plenty, and the ancient uniform universally approved.

Warwick had a flock of lads about him absorbed in the marvels he was producing with knife, stick and string; and Moor a rival flock of little lasses breathless with interest in the tales he told. One on each knee, two at each side, four in a row on the hay at his feet, and the boldest of all with an arm about his neck and a curly head upon his shoulder, for Uncle Abel's clothes seemed to invest the wearer with a passport to their confidence at once. Sylvia joined this group and partook of a quiet entertainment with as child-like a relish as any of them, while the merry tumult went on about her.

The toot of the horn sent the whole barnful streaming into the house like a flock of hungry chickens, where, by some process known only to the mothers of large families, every one was wedged close about the table, and the feast began. This was none of your stand-up, wafery, bread and butter teas, but a thorough going, sit-

down supper, and all settled themselves with a smiling satisfaction, prophetic of great powers and an equal willingness to employ them. A detachment of half-grown girls was drawn up behind grandma, as waiters; Sylvia insisted on being one of them, and proved herself a neat-handed Phillis, though for a time slightly bewildered by the gastronomic performances she beheld. Babies ate pickles, small boys sequestered pie with a velocity that made her wink, women swam in the tea, and the men, metaphorically speaking, swept over the table like a swarm of locusts, while the host and hostess beamed upon one another and their robust descendants with an honest pride, which was beautiful to see.

"That Mr. Wackett ain't eat scursely nothin', he jest sets lookin' round kinder 'mazed like. Do go and make him fall to on somethin', or I shan't take a mite of comfort in my vittles," said grandma, as the girl came with an empty cup.

"He is enjoying it with all his heart and eyes, ma'am, for we don't see such fine spectacles

everyday. I'll take him something that he likes and make him eat it."

"Sakes alive! be you to be Mis Wackett? I'd no idea of it, you look so young."

"Nor I; we are only friends, ma'am."

"Oh!" and the monosyllable was immensely expressive, as the old lady confided a knowing nod to the teapot, into whose depths she was just then peering. Sylvia walked away wondering why persons were always thinking and saying such things.

As she paused behind Warwick's chair with a glass of cream and a round of brown bread, he looked up at her with his blandest expression, though a touch of something like regret was in his voice.

"This is a sight worth living eighty hard years to see, and I envy that old couple as I never envied any one before. To rear ten virtuous children, put ten useful men and women into the world, and give them health and courage to work out their own salvation as these honest souls will

do, is a better job done for the Lord, than winning a battle, or ruling a State. Here is all honor to them. Drink it with me."

He put the glass to his lips, drank what she left, and rising, placed her in his seat with the decisive air which few resisted.

"You take no thought for yourself and are doing too much; sit here a little, and let me take a few steps where you have taken many."

He served her, and standing at her back, bent now and then to speak, still with that softened look upon the face so seldom stirred by the gentler emotions that lay far down in that deep heart of his; for never had he felt so solitary.

All things must have an end, even a family feast, and by the time the last boy's buttons peremptorily announced, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," all professed themselves satisfied, and a general uprising took place. The surplus population were herded in parlor and chambers, while a few energetic hands cleared away, and with much clattering of dishes and wafting

of towels, left grandma's spandy clean premises as immaculate as ever. It was dark when all was done, so the kitchen was cleared, the candles lighted, Patience's door set open, and little Nat established in an impromptu orchestra, composed of a table and a chair, whence the first squeak of his fiddle proclaimed that the ball had begun.

Everybody danced; the babies stacked on Patience's bed, or penned behind chairs, sprawled and pranced in unsteady mimicry of their elders. Ungainly farmers, stiff with labor, recalled their early days and tramped briskly as they swung their wives about with a kindly pressure of the hard hands that had worked so long together. Little pairs toddled gravely through the figures, or frisked promiscuously in a grand conglomeration of arms and legs. Gallant cousins kissed pretty cousins at exciting periods, and were not rebuked. Mark wrought several of these incipient lovers to a pitch of despair, by his devotion to the comeliest damsels, and the skill with which he executed unheard-of evolutions before

their admiring eyes; Moor led out the poorest and the plainest with a respect that caused their homely faces to shine, and their scant skirts to be forgotten.

Warwick skimmed his five years partner through the air in a way that rendered her speechless with delight; and Sylvia danced as she had never danced before. With sticky-fingered boys, sleepy with repletion, but bound to last it out; with rough-faced men who paid her paternal compliments; with smart youths who turned sheepish with that white lady's hand in their big brown ones, and one ambitious lad who confided to her his burning desire to work a saw-mill, and marry a girl with black eyes and yellow hair. While, perched aloft, Nat bowed away till his pale face glowed, till all hearts warmed, all feet beat responsive to the good old tunes which have put so much health into human bodies, and so much happiness into human souls.

At the stroke of nine the last dance came. All down the long kitchen stretched two breathless

rows; grandpa and grandma at the top, the youngest pair of grandchildren at the bottom, and all between fathers, mothers, uncles, aunts, and cousins, while such of the babies as were still extant, bobbed with unabated vigor, as Nat struck up the Virginia Reel, and the sturdy old couple led off as gallantly as the young one who came tearing up to meet them. Away they went, grandpa's white hair flying in the wind, grandma's impressive cap awry with excitement, as they ambled down the middle, and finished with a kiss when their tuneful journey was done, amid immense applause from those who regarded this as the crowning event of the day.

When all had had their turn, and twirled till they were dizzy, a short lull took place, with refreshments for such as still possessed the power of enjoying them. Then Phebe appeared with an armful of books, and all settled themselves for the family "sing."

Sylvia had heard much fine music, but never any that touched her like this, for, though often

discordant, it was hearty, with that under-current of feeling which adds sweetness to the rudest lay, and is often more attractive than the most florid ornament or faultless execution. Every one sang as every one had danced, with all their might; shrill children, soft-voiced girls, lullaby-singing mothers, gruff boys, and strong-lunged men; the old pair quavered, and still a few indefatigable babies crowed behind their little coops. Songs, ballads, comic airs, popular melodies, and hymns, came in rapid succession. And when they had ended with that song which should be classed with sacred music for association's sake, and standing hand in hand about the room with the golden bride and bridegroom in their midst, sang "Home," Sylvia leaned against her brother with dim eyes and a heart too full to sing.

Still standing thus when the last note had soared up and died, the old man folded his hands and began to pray. It was an old-fashioned prayer, such as the girl had never heard from the Bishop's lips; ungrammatical, inelegant and long.

A quiet talk with God, manly in its straight-forward confession of short-comings, child-like in its appeal for guidance, fervent in its gratitude for all good gifts, and the crowning one of loving children. As if close intercourse had made the two familiar, this human father turned to the Divine, as these sons and daughters turned to him, as free to ask, as confident of a reply, as all afflictions, blessings, cares and crosses, were laid down before him, and the work of eighty years submitted to his hand.

There were no sounds in the room but the one voice often tremulous with emotion and with age, the coo of some dreaming baby, or the low sob of some mother whose arms were empty, as the old man stood there, rugged and white atop as the granite hills, with the old wife at his side, a circle of sons and daughters girdling them round, and in all hearts the thought that as the former wedding had been made for time, this golden one at eighty must be for eternity.

While Sylvia looked and listened, a sense of

genuine devotion stole over her; the beauty and the worth of prayer grew clear to her through the earnest speech of that unlettered man, and for the first time she fully felt the nearness and the dearness of the Universal Father, whom she had been taught to fear, yet longed to love.

"Now, my children, you must go before the little folks are tuckered out," said grandpa, heartily. "Mother and me can't say enough to thank you for the presents you have fetched us, the dutiful wishes you have give us, the pride and comfort you have allers ben toe us. I ain't no hand at speeches, so I shan't make none, but jest say ef any 'fliction falls on any on you, remember mother's here toe help you bear it; ef any worldly loss comes toe you, remember father's house is yourn while it stans, and so the Lord bless and keep us all."

"Three cheers for gramper and grammer!" roared a six-foot scion as a safety-valve for sundry unmasculine emotions, and three rousing hurras made the rafters ring, struck terror to the

heart of the oldest inhabitant of the rat-haunted garret, and summarily woke all the babies.

Then the good-byes began, the flurry of wrong baskets, pails and bundles in wrong places; the sorting out of small folk too sleepy to know or care what became of them; the maternal cluckings, and paternal shouts for Kitty, Cy, Ben, Bill or Mary Ann; the piling into vehicles with much ramping of indignant horses unused to such late hours; the last farewells, the roll of wheels, as one by one the happy loads departed, and peace fell upon the household for another year.

"I declare for't, I never had sech an out and out good time sense I was born intoe the world," said grandma. "Abram, you are fit to drop, and so be I; now lets set and talk it over along of Patience fore we go toe bed."

The old couple got into their chairs, and as they sat there side by side, remembering that she had given no gift, Sylvia crept behind them, and lending the magic of her voice to the simple air,

sang the fittest song for time and place — "John Anderson, my Jo." It was too much for grandma, the old heart overflowed, and reckless of the cherished cap she laid her head on her "John's" shoulder, exclaiming through her tears —

"That's the cap sheaf of the hull, and I can't bear no more to-night. Abram, lend me your hankchif, for I dunno where mine is, and my face is all of a drip."

Before the red bandana had gently performed its work in grandpa's hand, Sylvia beckoned her party from the room, and showing them the clear moonlight night which followed the storm, suggested that they should both save appearances and enjoy a novel pleasure by floating homeward instead of sleeping. The tide against which they had pulled in coming up would sweep them rapidly along, and make it easy to retrace in a few hours the way they had loitered over for three days.

The pleasant excitement of the evening had not yet subsided, and all applauded the plan as a

fit finale to their voyage. The old lady strongly objected, but the young people overruled her, and being re-equipped in their damaged garments they bade the friendly family a grateful adieu, left their more solid thanks under Nat's pillow, and re-embarked upon their shining road.

"Moods."—*Miss Louisa M. Alcott.*

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